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Ph. D.

Raising the Question of Being

A Unification and Critique of the Philosophy of

Martin Heidegger

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Abstract

The thesis consists of two main divisions. The first presents an original interpretation of Martin Heidegger's philosophy. The second – premised on the first – presents a fundamental and internal critique of his philosophy.

The interpretative division demonstrates the way in which the history of being is structurally grounded in the ontological conformation of *Dasein*. This amounts to evincing the unity of Heidegger's development of his basic philosophical project: the raising of the question of being, and requires an original account of both the philosophy of the history of being and the existential analysis of *Dasein*, as well as of the so-called *Kehre*.

The critical division, which is founded upon the conclusions of the interpretative division, focuses on the structural grounding that Heidegger attempts to provide, within the existential analysis of *Dasein*, for his ontological demand for the overcoming of the epoch of metaphysics. This grounding is the cornerstone with which Heidegger's philosophy as a whole stands or falls. It is shown that, for internal reasons, Heidegger's grounding fails, and that the existential structures of *Dasein* found an essentially different ontological imperative. The most basic consequences of this failure and substitution are subsequently drawn out both for Heidegger's philosophy in particular and more generally.

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Preface

What follows is an essay on the structure of the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. *Structure* here (sometimes *Structurality*) refers to a particular configuration of relations abstracted from their particular relata.

The essay's initial aim is to develop an original interpretation of Heidegger's thinking, guided by the task of bringing to light its inner unity. Amongst Heidegger's interpreters it is commonly held that his thought passed through a number of disparate and chronologically determinable phases or periods. Little has it been considered, however, whether and how these might structurally concatenate in the light of what is allegedly the inner problematic of them all: the question of being; how they might all systematically affiliate to that problematic's internal organisation.

We shall begin with the premise that there are only two diachronic phases to Heidegger's thinking. Later it will become clear how these are made structurally necessary – only these two and in so far as they are two – by the question of being itself. It will also be seen that the project to raise the question of being and the nature of the question of being do not themselves transfigure at all.

The two phases of Heidegger's thinking are that of the existential analysis of *Dasein* and that of the philosophy of the history of being. The texts considered here to constitute the former are most notably, of course, *Sein und Zeit*, but also the lecture courses leading up to the publication of the *magnum opus* and those held immediately afterwards, as well as the individual lectures up until *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*, first given in 1930. We shall freely move between these texts in appropriating citations. The works considered to constitute the later phase are all those written after 1930, beginning with the latter named lecture and extending up until Heidegger's death in 1976, although the latest text that will be of importance to our purposes is *Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens*, which first appeared in 1964.

In accounting for the structural necessity of these two phases of Heidegger's thinking to the original project of raising the question of being, we shall be presenting an interpretation of the *unity* of his thought. At the same time – and precisely thereby – we shall be providing a thoroughgoing account of that thorn in the side of Heidegger-scholarship, the so called *Kehre*. The *Kehre*, at least as it has traditionally been conceived in the secondary literature,

will be recast in very concrete terms as the transition between the existential analysis of *Dasein* and the philosophy of the history of being. Laid out in this way, we shall be able to provide an account, not only of exactly what it amounts to, but also of its inner grounds, its inner necessity and motivation, within the architectonic of Heidegger's initial question. It will turn out that the *Kehre* is the necessary result of the unfolding of the inner structurality of the question of being.

As to the question of being itself, our interpretation of Heidegger's philosophy will also expressly amount to a wholesale reconsideration of its meaning. Giving a final account of what the question of being is, what it means to raise the question of being, what its motivations are, will constitute the final conclusion of our interpretation.

At that point we will be prepared to turn to criticism. In order to level a charge against Heidegger one must first locate him. This holds for every thinker, but the difficulties are compounded in the case of Heidegger because, on the one hand, the *status* of his claims is very much open to question, and, on the other, the terrain on which he is moving is, for essential reasons, unfamiliar to the objector. In so far as Heidegger's philosophy amounts to an "overcoming" of traditional, "metaphysical", modes of thought, any criticism itself grounded in these metaphysical modes of thinking begs the question against him, and is thereby rendered innocuous. Correspondingly, only criticisms which function *internally* to the structural configuration of Heidegger's philosophy, can be potent. Our critique will be internal in this sense – immanent to that configuration which we shall map out in the interpretative parts of the essay. The interpretative and critical parts will thus be seen to belong intimately together.

In essence, we shall level just one charge against Heidegger, one directed towards the very project of raising the question of being, and therefore towards the entirety of his philosophy. In the face of that single charge the whole considerable edifice of his thinking will stand or fall. However, in the course of our exposition we shall, where relevant, make reference and respond to other criticisms which have been directed towards Heidegger's thinking by his commentators.

In his recent book on Heidegger, Herman Philipse writes: 'I...argue that, for specific reasons pertaining to the nature of Heidegger's thought and to his highly innovative use of the resources of the German language, it is impossible to translate his texts without destroying their structure, their power, their magic.'¹ With this we agree. And we shall therefore retain the original German for quotation. This avoids the further problem of having to standardise the translations of Heidegger's locutions into the English language. Outside of the context of citations we shall translate only those concepts of Heidegger's which, on the one hand, can be

¹ Herman Philipse, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Being*, p. xvii

unproblematically translated into English, that is, which find more or less equivalents in the English language such that, in the process of translation, the meaning of the original German is not significantly lost, and, on the other, where this makes for a better English text. Typically the latter point will apply to those concepts which function both substantively and adjectivally. Inserting German adjectives into an English text leads to grammatical impasses. Those concepts which find no equivalent whatsoever in English, so that contriving a translation would put the non-German reader into no better a position than would the original, will be rendered in German. By these means we do not at all presume to clear up all the difficulties inherent in writing about Heidegger in English.

In the first part, we shall delineate the historical structures which configure the history of being. In the second part, we shall outline the existential structures of *Dasein*. In the third part, we shall demonstrate the way in which these structuralities connect to one another, and thus the way in which the two phases of Heidegger's thinking are related, and we shall subsequently trace this bipartite conformation back into the basic structurality of the project of raising the question of being. We shall then, in the fourth and final part, develop our fundamental and internal critique of this project, which amounts to an ultimately decisive attack on the total construction of Heidegger's philosophy. In conclusion, we shall pursue the consequences which follow from our objection, both for Heidegger's legacy itself, as well as more generally.

Part I:

The History of Being

Chapter 1:

First Beginnings

In his lecture entitled “*Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*” Heidegger writes: ‘Die Ek-sistenz des geschichtlichen Menschen [fängt] in jenem Augenblick an, da der erste Denker fragend sich der Unverborgenheit des Seienden stellt mit der Frage, was das Seiende sei. In dieser Frage wird erstmals die Unverborgenheit erfahren...Erst wo das Seiende selbst eigens in seine Unverborgenheit gehoben und verwahrt wird, erst wo diese Verwahrung aus dem Fragen nach dem Seienden als solchem begriffen ist, beginnt Geschichte.’¹ This beginning, which Heidegger came to refer to as “the first beginning” [*der erste Anfang*], is the beginning of the history of being.

The history of being [*Geschichte des Seins*] is no history in the usual historiographical sense (for which Heidegger reserves the name *Historie*); it does not have simply to do with a temporally related system of events. Nor is it merely one history among others. Despite – for essential reasons, of course – being a peculiarly Occidental phenomenon, the history of being is the ground of the possibility of all fundamental historical reality as such. It is, Heidegger tells us, the *Ereignis* of being as such, the unfolding of being itself, the *time*, or essential temporal determination, that belongs essentially to being. ‘Die Seinsgeschichte ist weder die Geschichte des Menschen und eines Menschentums noch die Geschichte des menschlichen Bezugs zum Seienden und zum Sein. Die Seinsgeschichte ist das Sein selbst und nur dieses.’² But grounded in the history of being is the history of the relationship of being to the human essence, and, what amounts to the same thing, the history of *truth*.

In this first part we shall attempt to sketch out the basic epochal structures of this history. In his preface to *The Question of Language in Heidegger's History of Being* Robert Bernasconi writes: ‘[The history of being] is not a story and cannot be retold as one’. – But *Geschichte* means just as much “story” as it does “history”. And so in what follows we are going to retell the story of Heidegger’s history of being, and that will sufficiently prove that it

¹ *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*, *Wegmarken*, pp. 189-190

² *Nietzsche II*, p. 447

can be retold as one. It is of course an unusual story, perhaps the story of all stories; but it has a beginning, perhaps even a happy ending (or at least another beginning), and that is surely the mark of a story. Indeed it is even to be thought *eschatologically*: 'Das Sein selbst ist als geschickliches in sich eschatologisch.'³ But we are not going to tell this story chronologically, that is, historically; we are going to tell it *structurally*.

The torch of being's history was lit in ancient Greece by the inceptual questioning of the pre-Socratic philosophers. Close attention to the nature of this beginning was always crucial to Heidegger's *seinsgeschichtliches Denken*; for, he thought, only by understanding its beginning is it possible to understand what the history of being is; but understanding what the history of being is, is a necessary presupposition for understanding what is really happening in the world over two millennia of history later, and therefore, most importantly of all, for appropriately responding to it.

Heraclitus and Parmenides are the most important of the pre-Socratic philosophers for Heidegger. He charges them with bringing a particular experience of being as such to language, with drawing being up into unconcealment for the first time in a way which was fundamentally determinative for the entire history of the West. To understand this, the very beginning of Western history, we shall consider in turn three fundamental concepts of the ancient world that form the kernel of Heidegger's interpretation of pre-Socratic thought.

Φύσις

The word used by the Greeks to refer to beings as such and as a whole was *φύσις*. This named not merely the agglomeration of everything that is, but the law or order of beings as a whole. *Φύσις* is usually rendered into modern languages according to its Latin translation: *natura*; English: nature. *Natura* originally means birth, to be born, but with this translation the primary sense of the Greek word has already been lost, and once, after two thousand years, *φύσις* is understood in terms of a modern concept of nature, it has entirely lost its inceptual meaning. Indeed, it was the translation of the thought of the ancient Greeks into Latin that, claims Heidegger, 'ist nichts Beliebigen und Harmlosen, sondern der erste Abschnitt des Verlaufs der Abriegelung und Entfremdung des ursprünglichen Wesens der griechischen Philosophie.'⁴ Still, a scarcely audible echo of the original Greek determination of *φύσις* comes down to us when we speak of the "nature" of man, the "nature" of things.

According to Heidegger, *φύσις* originally said 'das von sich aus Aufgehende... das sich eröffnende Entfalten, das in solcher Entfaltung in die Erscheinung-Treten und in ihr sich

³ Der Spruch des Anaximander, *Holzwege*, p. 302

⁴ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, pp. 10-11

Halten und Verbleiben, kurz, das aufgehend-verweilende Walten'⁵. Φύσις means “emerging sway” (*aufgehende Walten*). It stems from φύω, meaning to bring forth, to produce, to put forth, also to beget, to procreate, and also to grow, to arise, to spring up. But Heidegger insists that it does not refer to a particular “natural” process; rather, it is that by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable at all, that is, unconcealed. Φύσις named being as such; but this insofar as it named ‘das Seiende als solches im Ganzen’.

However, this inceptual sense of φύσις began immediately to be narrowed down, in particular by its being contrasted with the concept of τέχνη – a generating or producing that involves knowing and skill.⁶ Only an echo of it remains in Aristotle’s treatise on the concept in his *Physics B*, 1, in which it is brought into essential connection with the concepts of κίνησις, the state of “movedness”, motion (the state of rest being here also implicated) – although removed from the modern mathematical conception of movement as merely change of position through time⁷ – and ἀρχή, origin, beginning; and limited to only one specific region of beings: those that “grow”, as opposed to those that are made (those beings that are in movement, the origin of that movement residing within themselves). Heidegger sums up the Aristotelian understanding of the essence of φύσις as follows: ‘die *ausgängliche Verfügung über die Bewegtheit des von ihm selbst her und auf sich zu Bewegten*’.⁸ A sense of φύσις as emergence into presence remains in this characterisation, but in so far as it is used to characterise the mode of presencing of a particular region of beings, it is no longer taken to be the fundamental determination of beings as such and as a whole.

As a mode of presencing of a particular region of beings, φύσις in Aristotle’s sense is a particular determination of οὐσία. Οὐσία is formed from the feminine participle of the Greek verb to be, εἰμί, and could be used to refer to the “beingness” [*Seiendheit*] of beings, the determination as which beings are in so far as they are.⁹ Determined according to φύσις, it refers to the beingness of the region of beings which have the character of ἀρχή κινήσεως, a source (within themselves) of movement. Οὐσία was first coined as a technical term by Aristotle. Its originary meaning, claims Heidegger, is thrust aside when it is translated with Roman ears into “substance”. An appropriate modern translation for its inceptual Greek sense is however available, he claims, in the German word *An-wesen*, which can be rendered

⁵ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 11

⁶ Cf. chapter 4.

⁷ And fundamentally determined by the crucial Aristotelian concepts of ἐντελέχεια and μεταβολή.

⁸ Vom Wesen und Begriff der Φύσις Aristoteles, *Physik B*, 1, *Wegmarken*, p. 261 Aristotle writes, for example: ‘Of things that exist, some exist by nature [φύσις], some from other causes. By nature the animals and their parts exist, and the plants and the simple bodies (earth, fire, air, water) – for we say that these and the like exist by nature. All the things mentioned plainly differ from things which are *not* constituted by nature. For each of them has within itself a principle of motion and of stationariness (in respect of place, or of growth and decrease, or by way of alteration).’ [*Physics*, *B*, 1, 192b 9 – 16] And: ‘Nature is a principle of motion and change.’ [*Physics*, *Γ*, 1, 200b 12]

⁹ It also has the meaning of property, what is one’s own-most.

into English as “coming-to-presence”. In the Aristotelian concept of *οὐσία*, Heidegger also finds a sense of *abiding in presence* (not to be understood in terms of mere duration), and accordingly determines the late Greek understanding of beingness to be fundamentally: *constant presence* [*beständige Anwesenung*]. He claims: ‘Diese Auslegung des Seins wird weder begründet, noch wird gar der Grund ihrer Wahrheit erfragt. Denn wesentlicher als dieses bleibt im ersten Anfang des Denkens, daß überhaupt das Sein des Seienden begriffen wird.’¹⁰

The fact that Aristotle comes to understand *φύσις* as merely a particular determination of *οὐσία* betrays a subtle shift in Hellenic thinking, a repositioning beyond the thinking that constituted the inception of philosophy. The original sense of *φύσις*, emerging sway, becomes subordinated to *οὐσία*, constant presence, which thereby replaces it as the fundamental Greek determination of being as such. The shift from *φύσις* to *οὐσία* is made possible by a meaning shared between the two concepts: *φύσις* as coming-to-presence, *οὐσία* as constant presence. This inner core of the understanding of being in terms of presence, Heidegger will claim, remains decisive throughout the development of Western philosophy.

After Aristotle the meaning of *φύσις* was further narrowed down eventually to the concept of the physical and the contemporary notion of nature (whereby it is understood merely in terms of what naturally is). These developments, signifying fundamental changes within the Western understanding of being, are determined by the deep structures of the history of being. Their grounds will become clearer in what follows.

Λόγος

This word occurs very often in Heidegger’s writings. He devotes to it an essay-length treatment in the volume *Vorträge und Aufsätze* in relation to a saying of Heraclitus. *Λόγος* comes from *λέγειν*, Latin *legere*, from which the German word *legen*, “to put”, “to lay down”, derives. *Legen*, however, is the same as the German *lesen*, English: “to collect”, “to gather” (fruit or firewood, for example), perhaps “to glean”, but also “to read”. *Lesen*, as regards its etymology, is to be understood in terms of “gathering” [*versammeln*], “bringing together” and “putting-forth into unconcealedness”. “Reading” is merely a variant application of this authentic sense of gathering. In this notion of gathering and putting-forth into unconcealedness lies the essence of the Greek understanding of *λόγος*: ‘ὁ Λόγος, das Legen: das reine beisammen-vor-liegen-Lassen des von sich her Vorliegenden in dessen Liegen. So west der Λόγος als das reine versammelnde lesende Legen. Der Λόγος is die ursprüngliche Versammlung der anfänglichen Lese aus der anfänglichen Lege. Ὁ Λόγος ist: die lesende

¹⁰ Vom Wesen und Begriff der *Φύσις* Aristoteles, Physik B, 1, *Wegmarken*, p. 266

lege und nur dieses.¹¹ *Λόγος* is the gathering together that puts forth into unconcealedness [*vor-liegen-Lassen*], into presence; that which gathers into oneness [*Ἐν Παντα*] all that presences. This account of the Greek conception of *λόγος* dates from 1951, but its basic idea is also to be found in *Sein und Zeit*'s brief characterisation of the concept in relation to the determination of the concept of phenomenology. Here Heidegger writes for example: 'λόγος als Rede besagt vielmehr soviel wie δηλοῦν, offenbar machen das, wovon in der Rede "die Rede" ist... Der λόγος läßt etwas sehen (φαίνεσθαι)...'¹²

It should be expected that according to Heidegger there is to be found an inner connection between the concepts of *φύσις* and *λόγος*. Such a connection is discussed in the 1935 lecture course *Einführung in die Metaphysik* under the heading *Die Beschränkung des Seins: Sein und Denken*. Here, again in the context of a discussion of the philosophy of Heraclitus, *λόγος* and *φύσις* are claimed to be the same. *Λόγος* as constant gathering, as the gatheredness of beings that stand-forth in presence, is the same as being itself, that is, the same as *φύσις*, the *emerging sway*. Emerging sway and gathering mean the same: the being of beings – gathered-coming-to-presence. 'Das Sein, die *φύσις*, ist als Walten ursprüngliche Gesammeltheit: *λόγος*'¹³. The ground of the sameness of *φύσις* and *λόγος* rests in the revealing character of *λόγος*. *Λόγος*, as gatheredness, puts forth into unconcealment, that is, lets beings presence, present themselves.

It is precisely this sense of *λόγος* that grounds its determination as the essence of *language*.¹⁴ The Greeks, Heidegger would like to say, conceived of language in terms of this originary opening up of beings. *Λόγος* came to be understood in terms of language, only by virtue of its originary meaning in terms of the revealing of beings.¹⁵ Language itself gathers and puts-forth beings into unconcealedness, reveals beings. Heidegger writes: 'Die Eröffnung des Seienden geschieht im Logos als Sammlung. Diese vollzieht sich ursprünglich in der Sprache.'¹⁶ Heidegger kept to this supposedly Greek conception of language throughout his philosophical career.

Insofar as *λόγος* determines the essence of the Greek understanding of language, it also determines the Greek conception of the essence of the human. In terms of his capacity for language, as the speaker, man, to whom beings are revealed, become present in their

¹¹ *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, pp. 207-8

¹² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 32

¹³ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 123

¹⁴ *λέγω* means not merely "to lay down" and "to gather" but also "to say", "to speak".

¹⁵ Cf., for example, the accepted translation of the beginning of the Gospel according to John: '[1]In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God and the word was God. [2]He was in the beginning with God. [3]All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being that has come into being. [4]In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. [5]The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.' [New Revised Standard Version] The word, *λόγος*, is here placed into essential connection with *beginning*, with *coming into being*, with *life*, and with *light*.

being, is understood as the “preserver” and “governor” of the open region as such, that is of being as such. ‘Menschsein heißt: die Sammlung, das sammelnde Vernehmen des Seins des Seienden, das wissende Ins-Werk-setzen des Erscheinens *übernehmen* und so die Unverborgenheit *verwalten*, sie gegen Verborgenheit und Verdeckung *bewahren*.’¹⁷

This understanding of the essence of man, however, was quickly covered over in subsequent thought and with it the inceptual meaning of *λόγος*. Man became eventually the *animal rationale*, and *λόγος* merely one of his “faculties”, albeit still the one that fundamentally determined his essence, and this definition subsequently became a basic supposition of Western thinking, the prevalence of which still remains unshaken. In this development, *λόγος* was taken out of its essential belonging together with *φύσις* and became instead *juxtaposed* to it: reason came to preside over being, thinking and being were rendered asunder. Being was set across and apart from thinking as something that is to be re-presented by thinking, as object to a subject. The inner grounds of this transformation will become clearer in what follows; it can, however, here be stated that in this historical division between *φύσις* and *λόγος*, Heidegger sees the fundamental determination of the history of the Western world.

Ἀλήθεια

Ἀλήθεια is traditionally translated into English as “truth”, or “reality”. It is not with these translations as such that Heidegger takes issue, but with the fact that they are understood without Greek ears. For *ἁλήθεια*, originally at least – perhaps even pre-originally –, meant something fundamentally different from that which is understood by us moderns under the title “truth”. Heidegger translates *ἁλήθεια* with “unconcealment” [*Unverborgenheit*]. This translation captures the etymology of the word and therefore, for Heidegger, its originary meaning. *Λήθη* means forgetting, forgottenness, originary concealedness, place of oblivion. The addition of the Greek *a-privativum* implies its opposite: un-concealedness, dis-closure.¹⁸

But defining truth in terms of its opposite in this way means that untruth is determinative of truth. Unconcealment is possible only on the basis of a prior concealment; indeed, only possible on the basis of an emergence into unconcealment. This determination of truth in terms of its opposite introduces a binary opposition on which, as we shall see, the whole structurality of Heidegger’s thinking hangs.

¹⁶ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 141

¹⁷ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 133 Heidegger presents an in depth discussion of the Greek understanding of the being of man in relation to the Greek concept of tragedy from p. 106 ff.

¹⁸ There is, of course, some debate surrounding this etymological derivation of *ἁλήθεια*. We shall assume, with the majority of scholars, that it is correct. In anycase, Heidegger’s thinking here does not stand or fall with the etymology.

Now truth and being belong essentially together for Heidegger. Being is “what” is true. The Greek concept of truth is thus, according to him, intrinsically connected to the Greek understanding of being. Indeed, Heidegger claims: ‘das griechische Wesen der Wahrheit ist nur in eins mit dem griechischen Wesen des Seins als φύσις möglich.’¹⁹ We have characterised φύσις in terms of emerging sway, as the coming into *appearance* as such, emerging into *presence*. It is not difficult to see the connection between this understanding of the being of beings and the understanding of truth in terms of unconcealment: coming to presence, presencing, is precisely to be understood in terms of emerging out of concealment into unconcealment, in terms of the relationship between concealment and unconcealment. ‘Unverborgenheit ist der Grundzug dessen, was schon zum Vorschein gekommen ist und die Verborgenheit hinter sich gelassen hat... [D]as Unverborgene [wird] unmittelbar nur als das zum-Vorschein-Gekommene, Anwesende erfahren’²⁰. Thus unconcealment is a basic determination of the Hellenic understanding of being as such. ‘Indem Seiendes als ein solches *ist*, stellt es sich in die und steht es in der *Unverborgenheit*, ‘αλήθεια.’²¹ The essence of φύσις and the essence of ‘αλήθεια mutually imply one another.

But as the emergence into unconcealment, being is also essentially to be understood in terms of concealment: ‘Der Grundzug des Anwesens selbst ist durch das Verborgen- und Unverborgenbleiben bestimmt.’²² Heidegger frequently discusses the notions of concealment and unconcealment in relation to a saying of Heraclitus known as Fragment 123: φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ, conventionally translated: “nature loves to hide”. Heidegger translates it: ‘Sein [aufgehendes Erscheinen] neigt in sich zum Sichverbergen.’²³ He takes this fragment to express the thought that concealment – or self-concealment – is a fundamental determination of being as such. Indeed, only once it is understood that, for the Greeks, concealment belongs essentially to being, does it become understandable why they expressed their concept of truth *negatively*, ‘α-λήθεια.

Insofar as truth as ‘αλήθεια has an intrinsic connection to being as φύσις, and being as φύσις has an intrinsic connection to λόγος, there must also be an intrinsic connection between ‘αλήθεια and λόγος. Λόγος is the “happening of unconcealment”, the gathering putting-forth into unconcealment, that is, into truth, ‘αλήθεια. Truth as unconcealment is the basic determination of the essence of λόγος. ‘Die lesende Lege hat als der Λόγος Alles, das

¹⁹ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 78 Also: ‘Weil, griechisch erfahren, das Seiende als solches φύσις, *Aufgang*, ist, gehört zum Seienden als solchem die ‘αλήθεια, die Unverborgenheit.’ [*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 97]

²⁰ *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 251 And further: ‘Mit dem Unverborgenen und seiner Unverborgenheit ist jeweils das genannt, was in dem Aufenthaltsbezirk des Menschen jedesmal das offen Anwesende ist.’ [Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 219]

²¹ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 77

²² *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 254

²³ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 87

Anwesende, in die Unverborgenheit niedergelegt... Der *Λόγος* legt ins Anwesen vor und legt das Anwesende ins Anwesen nieder, d. h. zurück. An-wesen besagt jedoch: *hervorgekommen im Unverborgenen wahren*. Insofern der *Λόγος* das Vorliegende als ein solches vorliegen läßt, entbirgt er das Anwesende in sein Anwesen. Das Entbergen aber ist die *Αλήθεια*. Diese und der *Λόγος* sind das Selbe. Das *λέγειν* läßt *ἀληθέα*, Unverborgenes als solches vorliegen.²⁴ This determines the relation of language to truth: language, as the opening up of beings as such, is grounded in truth as *ἀλήθεια*; and it also determines the essence of the human implicated therein: the essence of the human must be understood as intrinsically related to truth as such; the human must be conceived as standing in the truth, which says the same as: standing in the open presence of being – but this in the sense of revealing, un-concealing being.

Insofar as both *λόγος* and *φύσις* are mutually determined essentially by revealing, by emerging into presence, truth as *ἀλήθεια* is the ground of their essential belonging together, their inner equivalence. 'Die Unverborgenheit nämlich ist jenes Innere, d. h. der waltende Bezug zwischen *φύσις* und *λόγος* im ursprünglichen Sinne.'²⁵ This is expressed beyond the horizon of the interpretation of the Greeks as follows: 'Die Unverborgenheit ist gleichsam das Element, in dem es Sein sowohl wie Denken und ihre Zusammengehörigkeit erst gibt.'²⁶ It is precisely a change in the *essence* of truth that determines the subsequent *juxtaposition* of *φύσις* and *λόγος* at the end of the great Greek inception of philosophy, the juxtaposition of being and thinking that is decisive for the history of the West.

²⁴ *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 212

²⁵ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 145

²⁶ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 76

Chapter 2:

An Ambiguity in Plato: the Changing of the Essence¹ of Truth

The great inception of Western philosophy culminated with the thought of Plato and Aristotle. Between them, they defined the horizon, according to Heidegger, for all subsequent philosophical and, more broadly, “cultural” developments in the West. But nevertheless Plato and Aristotle, for him, already mark a falling away from their origins. What determined the history of the West was not the inception of thinking in its originariness, but in its decline. Restricting our view for the time being, we shall examine how this falling away from the inception took place, and the sense in which it was determinative for the history of the West, by focusing on Heidegger’s discussion of Plato’s philosophy in his famous essay *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit*².

In this essay Heidegger presents an interpretation of Plato’s so called simile of the cave.³ In the first place it should be pointed out that with this simile, Plato is, explicitly at least, giving an account of *παιδεία*, meaning something like “education” (Heidegger claims that it is untranslatable), as he states right at the beginning of Book VII.⁴ The cave dweller who is led out of the cave corresponds to one who goes through a process of *παιδεία*. The result is the seeing, or knowledge, of things as they really are, not just as they seem. In Heidegger’s view, this account of the concept of *παιδεία* rests upon a certain way of conceiving truth, *ἀλήθεια*, unconcealment. It is clear that *Ἀλήθεια* and *παιδεία* are, in Plato’s

¹ One might initially wonder what Heidegger can possibly mean by a change in the *essence* of truth, since truth *itself*, one thinks, is always unchanging, even if one wishes to claim that *what* is true changes in the course of history. At the very most what can change is the way in which truth is understood, or the way in which truth is implicitly or explicitly conceptualised. But this would be to take Heidegger’s usage of essence [*Wesen*] to mean the same as *essentia*. And this would be erroneous. For *Wesen*, for Heidegger, is to be understood verbally, as the way in which truth, in this case, *holds sway*; that is: the way in which it *is* as truth. When he speaks of a change in the essence of truth, Heidegger is speaking of a historical change in the holding sway of truth, which is the same as to say, in the destiny of being itself. Nevertheless, for the sake of clarity we shall for the most part speak of a change in the understanding of truth. For, in any case, the way in which truth is understood and the way in which truth holds sway ultimately amount to the same thing.

² In *Wegmarken*, pp. 203-238.

³ *Republic* VII, 514a, 2 – 517a, 7

simile, intimately and essentially connected: *παιδεία* is described as a process involving fundamental changes in the way in which beings are unconcealed: the things taken to be real are at first merely shadows projected on the wall by the light of a fire, next they are things lit up by the light of the fire itself, and finally things revealed by the light of the sun; and thus in the sorts of things that can appear: first the shadows, then the things of which they are shadows, then the fire, then real things, and finally the sun itself. Indeed, Plato's simile is only decipherable on the presupposition that truth is to be understood in terms of unconcealment, and only then does something like the image of a cave become structurally possible: 'Überhaupt kann dieses "Gleichnis" nur deshalb ein auf den Anblick der Höhle gebautes "Gleichnis" sein, weil es im voraus von der für die Griechen selbstverständlichen Grunderfahrung der *'αλήθεια*, der Unverborgenheit des Seienden, mitbestimmt wird.'⁵

However, Heidegger claims that Plato's simile introduces a subtle modification into the basic understanding of truth as unconcealment, a change, which, although barely perceptible, had the deepest ramifications for the subsequent thinking of the West. This change fundamentally hinges on Plato's concepts of *εἶδος* and *ἰδέα*. *Εἶδος* (from *εἶδω*, to see, Latin, *vi-deo*) means *that which is seen*, a form, a shape, a figure. *Ἰδέα*, from which *εἶδος* takes its root, *ιδ*, means *the look* of a thing, the outward or surface appearance. '*ἰδέα* ist... der *Anblick*, den etwas bietet, das Aussehen, das es hat und gleichsam vor sich her zur Schau trägt, *εἶδος*.'⁶ Thus *εἶδος* and *ἰδέα* have to do with the see-able-ness of that which is see-able, the *visibility* of that which is *visible*:

Im "Höhlengleichnis" entspringt die Kraft der Veranschaulichung nicht aus dem Bilde der Verslossenheit des unterirdischen Gewölbes und der Verhaftung in das Verslossene, auch nicht aus dem Anblick des Offenen im Außerhalb der Höhle. Die bildgebende Deutungskraft des "Gleichnisses" sammelt sich für Platon vielmehr in der Rolle des Feuers, des Feuerscheins und der Schatten, der Tageshelle, des Sonnenlichtes und der Sonne. Alles liegt am Scheinen des Erscheinenden und an der Ermöglichung seiner Sichtbarkeit. Die Unverborgenheit wird zwar in ihren verschiedenen Stufen genannt, aber sie wird nur daraufhin bedacht, wie sie das Erscheinende in seinem Aussehen (*εἶδος*) zugänglich und dieses Sichzeigende (*ἰδέα*) sichtbar macht. Die eigentliche Besinnung geht auf das in der Helle des Scheins gewährte Erscheinen des Aussehens. Dieses gibt die Aussicht auf das, als was jegliches Seiende anwest. Die eigentliche Besinnung gilt der *ἰδέα*. Die "Idee" ist das die Aussicht in das Anwesende verleihende Aussehen.⁷

⁴ This discussion is, of course, embedded within a wider one that is ultimately political in bearing. Perhaps importantly, Heidegger completely ignores the political contextualisation of Plato's simile of the cave.

⁵ *Wegmarken*, p. 224

⁶ *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 62

⁷ *Wegmarken*, p. 225

Evidence for this can be found, for example, in the following passage in which Socrates is speaking of the man freed from his fetters, who, dragged out of the cave, is at first blinded by the light: ‘Then there would be need of habituation, I take it, to enable him to see the things higher up. And at first he would most easily discern the shadows and, after that, the likenesses or reflections in water of men and other things, and later, the things themselves, and from these he would go on to contemplate the appearances in the heavens and heaven itself, more easily by night, looking at the light of the stars and the moon, than by day the sun and the sun’s light.’⁸

The focus of this passage is on not the degree of unconcealment as such that is brought about by the exit from the cave, but rather on the *visibility* of the things themselves revealed in this unconcealment, their *visible* appearance, what the former prisoner can *see*, even though it is precisely the degree of unconcealment that determines in advance the visibility of the things.

Fundamentally, this is the meaning of the sun as the image for the form that gives reality to all forms: τὸ ἀγαθόν. The sun, as the source of light, is, of course, that which determines the highest unconcealedness, that in reference to which unconcealedness as such is to be understood.⁹ But in so far as the sun is the source of light, that which gives visibility to everything that it shines upon, unconcealment here is to be understood in terms of the *becoming visible* of things, that is, in terms of ἰδέα. Fundamentally, unconcealment, ἀλήθεια, is, after Plato, to be understood *in terms of visibility*, seeing: “Unverborgenheit” meint jetzt das Unverborgene stets als das durch die Scheinsamkeit der Idee Zugängliche. Sofern aber der Zugang notwendig durch ein “Sehen” vollzogen wird, ist die Unverborgenheit in die “Relation” zum Sehen eingespannt, “relativ” auf dieses.¹⁰ To drop the metaphor, in Plato’s metaphysics, it is the idea of the “good” that is the source of all that is seen: ‘in the region of the known the last thing to be seen and hardly seen is the idea of good, and that when seen it must needs point us to the conclusion that this is indeed the cause for all things of all that is right [ὀρθῶν] and beautiful, giving birth in the visible world to light, and the author of light and itself in the intelligible world’.¹¹

Insofar as it is the ἰδέα that determines unconcealment, Plato attributes to it a *priority* over ἀλήθεια. This determines a shift in the understanding of truth, whereby unconcealment ceases to be grasped as its fundamental determination. Instead, since the possibility of our apprehension of beings is now to be understood, not in terms of their unconcealment as such,

⁸ *Republic* VII, 516a, 5 – 516b, 2

⁹ Likewise, the idea of the good is to be understood as being the source of all knowledge: ‘This reality, then, that gives their truth to the objects of knowledge and the power of knowing to the knower, you must say is the idea of good, and you must conceive it as being the cause of knowledge, and of truth in so far as known.’ *Republic* VI, 508e, 1 – 508e, 3

¹⁰ *Wegmarken*, p. 226

but in terms of their visibility, in terms of the seeing of their visible form, the view that they offer, what comes to be understood as the fundamental determination of truth is the *adequate* or *correct* seeing of them – ὀρθότης. In Plato's simile, what is essentially important for παιδεία is the securing of the possibility of this correct seeing. The journey out of the cave is not to be understood primarily in terms of the progressive unfolding of unconcealment, but rather in terms of the becoming more correct of the seeing of the former prisoner, whereby the respective things that he takes to be real become *realer*, that is, more in being. Further, the centrality of the concept of ὀρθότης explains Plato's emphasis on the necessity that the eyes of the released prisoner adapt themselves to the particular level of unconcealment in order to see or identify properly the things that surround him. This adaptation is the conforming to the thing of the seeing, which thereby becomes correct. 'Zufolge dieser Angleichung des Vernehmens als eines ἰδεῖν an die ἰδέα besteht eine ὁμοίωσις, eine Übereinstimmung des Erkennens mit der Sache selbst. So entspringt aus dem Vorrang der ἰδέα und des ἰδεῖν vor der ἀλήθεια eine Wandlung des Wesens der Wahrheit. Wahrheit wird zur ὀρθότης, zur Richtigkeit des Vernehmens und Aussagens.'¹²

The possibility of this change in the essence of truth rests upon an *ambiguity* in Plato's thinking. While he speaks of ἀλήθεια, he understands unconcealment in terms of visibility, that is, in *relation* to the eyes, and thus it is the correctness of the seeing rather than unconcealment as such that it implicitly understood to be what is *most* essential to the determination of truth. The ambiguity consists in the fact that ἀλήθεια is understood both in terms of unconcealment (visibility) *and* in terms of correctness, in so far as the particular determination of correctness, appropriately adjusted seeing, is grounded in unconcealment as visibility. The exposition of the levels of unconcealment is throughout determined according to the visible form of things, and consequently according to the correctness of the gaze. We can see the ambiguity manifest clearly in the quote above [*Republic* VII, 517b, 8 – c, 3] where the idea, or form, of the good is said to be both the cause of all that is ὀρθῶν (translated by Paul Shorey as "right", but in the sense of right-ness ("Richt-ig-keit"), the correctness of knowing), and of *light*, of the unconcealment of things as such. Truth, grounded in the form of all forms, is here, at one and the same time, *both* unconcealment and correctness, although correctness already has the priority in the determination of the way in which it holds sway.

It is precisely the presence of this ambiguity that allows the change in the essence of truth to take place. Perhaps the most fundamental aspect of this change is the shift in the *locus* of truth: conceived in terms of unconcealment, truth is a basic trait of things

¹¹ *Republic* VII, 517b, 8 – c, 3

¹² *Wegmarken*, pp. 230-31

themselves¹³; as the correctness of the gaze it is located on the side of the human comportment. This conception finds its first clear expression in Aristotle who writes in Book VI of the *Metaphysics*: 'For falsehood and truth are not in actual things... but in thought'¹⁴. Thus judgement or assertion becomes the locus of truth, which is subsequently determined according to whether the judgement or assertion conforms, accords or corresponds with the object or state of affairs that it purports to be about; if so, it is correct, if not, it is false. Unconcealment, the *emergence* into *presence*, has completely dropped out of the picture for this determination of truth, it has retreated into oblivion, forgottenness, concealment, and truth is understood entirely without recourse to it. The essence of truth has decisively changed.¹⁵

Essentially connected to the changing of the understanding of truth is a corresponding change in the Hellenic understanding of being. We have seen how intimately being as *φύσις* is entwined with truth as *ἀλήθεια*. Plato understands being in terms of *ἰδέα*, more precisely, in terms of *ἡ ἰδέα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ*, the form of the good, and the ambiguity in his understanding of truth cannot be divorced from this particular understanding of being. The difference between understanding being as *φύσις* on the one hand and as *ἰδέα* on the other is fundamental:

Φύσις ist das aufgehende Walten, das In-sich-dastehen, ist Ständigkeit. *Ἰδέα*, Aussehen als das Gesichtete, ist eine Bestimmung des Ständigen, sofern es und nur sofern es einem Sehen entgegensteht. Aber *φύσις* als aufgehendes Walten ist doch auch schon ein Erscheinen. Allerdings. Nur ist das Erscheinen doppeldeutig. Erscheinen besagt einmal: das sich sammelnde, in der Gesammeltheit Sich-zum-Stand-bringen und so Stehen. Dann aber heißt Erscheinen: als schon Dastehendes eine Vorderfläche, Oberfläche darbieten, ein Aussehen als Angebot für das Hinsehen.¹⁶

¹³ 'Die *ἀλήθεια* ist für die Griechen eine, ja die Grundbestimmung des Seienden selbst'. [*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 130]

¹⁴ *Metaphysics* E, 4, 1027b, 25

¹⁵ It might be wondered how much the supposed change in the implicit understanding of truth testified by Plato's parable hangs on what is allegedly its key theme: *παιδεία*, education. Does not the possibility of a process of education essentially require that truth be conceived in terms of correctness? Is not the process of education precisely that of routing falsehood and cultivating correctness? At least for Plato, this is not the case. For his simile does not have to do with correctness *and falsity*, but merely with the progressive unfolding of degrees of reality, both as a consequence of taking up, literally, a higher standpoint and of the adaptation of the eyes, the cognitive faculty. What the prisoners see (shadows) is nothing *false*, but rather something with only a *marginal degree of reality*. They see the shadows correctly after all, and even have competitions and honours for he 'who is quickest to make out the shadows as they pass and best able to remember their customary precedences, sequences and coexistences, and so most successful in guessing at what was to come' [516c 8 – d 2]. As far as *παιδεία* is concerned, the simile has to do with the progressive unfolding of the unconcealment of reality as such. In which case Heidegger's claim does not seem to hang on the central place accorded to *παιδεία*. For him, Plato's process of *παιδεία* has finally to do with a change in the essence of the human. Later we shall see that this change means entering into the unconcealment of being as such.

¹⁶ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 139

For Plato the fundamental determination of being as *ἰδέα* is see-able-ness. 'Die Idee ist das Gesicht, wodurch jeweils etwas sein Aussehen zeigt, uns ansieht... Aus diesem Aussehen her sieht es uns an.'¹⁷ This corresponds to the determination of truth as correctness in so far as see-able-ness grounds the normativity of an adequate seeing, a seeing that conforms to that which it sees. Adjustment to the light and adjustment to the dark, metaphors determined according to being as see-able-ness, are necessary in order that man perceive the things as they are, no matter for the degree of their being.

Heidegger claims that something fundamental has changed here concerning the understanding of both truth and being. One might wonder, however, whether that really is so, and whether Plato has not merely refined the understanding of truth as unconcealment; made it more precise by determining it in terms of visibility, and provided it with an *explanation*. But for Heidegger, Plato's attempt to identify a *source* of unconcealment – *αἱ ἰδέαι*, the forms, more precisely, the form of the good – marks a radical displacement away from the inceptual questioning at the origin of philosophy. On the one hand, shifting the terms across, being is no longer the process of unconcealment itself; it is now the ground of it. On the other hand, shifting them back again, Plato has here attempted to *explain being as such in terms of beings*. By doing this he establishes what Heidegger calls a *priority* [*Vorrang*] of beings over being. This determines beings to be the proper objects of philosophical thought; at the origin of philosophy it was being itself, understood in terms of *φύσις*, which was the matter for thinking. Thus Plato inaugurates a forgottenness of being [*Seinsvergessenheit*]. As we shall see, *Seinsvergessenheit* subsequently holds sway over the entire history of the West.

Plato attempts to explain unconcealment in terms of beings, determining being as see-able-ness and inaugurating the implicit understanding of the essence of truth in terms of the correctness of the gaze. In doing this Plato *disperses* the elements which once comprised the inceptual understanding of being: *φύσις*, *ἀλήθεια* and *λόγος*. These three, *φύσις* as emerging sway, *ἀλήθεια* as unconcealment and *λόγος* as gathering putting-forth, all arise from the same experience. But once being is understood as see-able-ness and truth is understood as correctness, *subjectivity* is introduced, which amounts to the falling away of the inceptual sense of *λόγος*. Subjectivity is that which stands across and opposed to beings determined in their being as see-able. Subjectivity is that which *sees*. The three elements that once formed a simple unity are dispersed, for see-able-ness, correctness and subjectivity say not at all the same thing. This is apparent from the fact that truth as correctness is understood in terms of a *relation* of conformance or *correspondence* between subjectivity and beings. To this

¹⁷ *Was Heißt Denken?*, p. 135

dispersion of truth, subjectivity and being belongs essentially the forgetting of being as such – the inceptual unity of them all.

The change in the essence of truth from unconcealment to correctness marks a fundamental event in the history of being: it inaugurates the epoch of metaphysics, which endures fundamentally unchanged in its essence throughout Occidental history until its essential culmination [*Vollendung*] in Nietzsche's philosophy. Metaphysical thinking is wholly grounded upon the understanding of truth in terms of correctness. What is decisive for the history of being is that the particular understanding of being corresponding to the reinterpretation of truth in terms of correctness thematises being as such only in terms of beings (e.g. Plato's forms), which amounts to saying that it replaces being as such with beings as causes, higher *beings*.¹⁸ The understanding of being in terms of beings – in terms of *ἰδέα* – becomes the sole and definitive understanding of being remaining thenceforth determinative throughout the history of the West, even up until Hegel, who explicitly conceives being, the actuality of the actual, as "idea".

Whilst the transformations of these original Greek concepts are all mutually implicatory, Heidegger insists that it is the change in the essence of truth that is most fundamental of all: 'Der Wandel von φύσις und λόγος zu Idee und Aussage hat seinen inneren Grund in einem Wandel des Wesens der Wahrheit als Unverborgenheit zur Wahrheit als Richtigkeit.'¹⁹ Only once the remainder of Heidegger's philosophical architecture is in place will the meaning of this claim become transparent.

At this point we should mention Heidegger's famous "retraction" of his essay on Plato's doctrine of truth. In *Das Ende der Philosophie und die Aufgabe des Denkens* (first published in French in 1964) Heidegger writes:

Der natürliche Begriff von Wahrheit meint nicht Unverborgenheit, auch nicht in der Philosophie der Griechen. Man weist öfter und mit Recht darauf hin, daß schon bei Homer das Wort ἀληθείς immer nur von den verba dicendi, vom Aussagen und deshalb im Sinne der Richtigkeit und Verlässlichkeit gebraucht werde, nicht im Sinne von Unverborgenheit. Allein dieser Hinweis bedeutet zunächst nur, daß weder die Dichter noch der alltägliche Sprachgebrauch, daß nicht einmal die Philosophie sich vor die Aufgabe gestellt sehen zu fragen, inwiefern die Wahrheit, d. h. die Richtigkeit der Aussage nur im Element der Lichtung von Anwesenheit gewährt bleibt.

¹⁸ To this extent, following Plato in attempting to identify a source of unconcealment, metaphysical thinking is *essentially* theological. 'Die Metaphysik ist in sich Theologie.' [*Nietzsche II*, p. 313] For an extended discussion of this implication see *Die Onto-theo-logische Verfassung der Metaphysik, Identität und Differenz*.

¹⁹ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 145

Im Gesichtskreis dieser Frage muß anerkannt werden, daß die *Ἀλήθεια*, die Unverborgenheit im Sinne der Lichtung von Anwesenheit sogleich und nur als *ὁρθότης*, als die Richtigkeit des Vorstellens und Aussagens erfahren wurde. Dann ist aber auch die Behauptung von einem Wesenswandel der Wahrheit, d. h. von der Unverborgenheit zur Richtigkeit, nicht haltbar.²⁰

This statement should be read against the context of Heidegger's well-known dispute over Plato's understanding of truth with the German classicist Paul Friedländer.²¹ Aside from etymological issues (which will not concern us here), Friedländer points out that *ἀλήθεια* was being used in the sense of the correctness of utterance much earlier than Plato, for example, already in Homer, and that therefore it cannot be the case that Plato somehow introduced this new understanding of truth. Heidegger's statement here is commonly taken by commentators to be a simple retraction of his essay. But how much of a retraction is it?

In the first place it should be noted that Heidegger is only discussing the "natural" usage of the concept of truth. In regard to the Greeks, he points out that the fact that this concept was not used in the sense of unconcealment proves only that everyday usage, poets and even philosophers had failed to see that the correctness of the assertion is only possible given the clearing of presence, that is, unconcealment. Nevertheless he maintains that unconcealment as such *was* experienced; he claims, for example, a few pages earlier: 'Parmenides [mußte] erfahren: die *Ἀλήθεια*, die Unverborgenheit.'²² This experience is, after all, fossilised in the Greek language. But it was experienced immediately and only in terms of truth as correctness. The claim, then, that *before* Plato the Greeks understood truth in terms of unconcealment and *after* Plato in terms of the correctness of assertion, the claim that the essence of truth went through a chronological transmutation, must in consequence be false. But was this the claim that Heidegger wanted to make in his essay on Plato's doctrine of truth?

Only a superficial reading would suggest the chronological account; on closer analysis, Heidegger's text is drawing attention to a *structural* ambiguity within Plato's ontology; and not just any ambiguity, but one essential to the conceptuality he employs. Rather than chronologically, Heidegger's essay is to be understood structurally; and consequently, Heidegger's supposed retraction turns out only to concern a particular and superficial reading of his text. The primary focus of Heidegger's essay is the way in which truth understood as unconcealment essentially transmutes into truth as correctness, that is, the way in which unconcealment is inherently prone to fall out of its essence, not the

²⁰ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, pp. 77-78

²¹ See his *Platon*, and for an overview of the debate see Bernasconi's *The Question of Language in Heidegger's History of Being*, pp. 19-23.

identification of a precise historical moment in which this took place. The change is a structural transfiguration; not a chronological metamorphosis. Thus Heidegger can write:

Platons Lehre von der "Wahrheit" ist...nichts Vergangenes. Sie ist geschichtliche "Gegenwart", dies aber nicht nur als historisch nachgerechnete "Nachwirkung" eines Lehrstückes, auch nicht als Wiedererweckung, auch nicht als Nachahmung des Alterums, auch nicht als bloße Bewahrung des Überkommenen. Jener Wandel des Wesens der Wahrheit ist gegenwärtig als die längst gefestigte und daher noch unverrückte, alles durchherrschende Grundwirklichkeit der in ihre neueste Neuzeit anrollenden Weltgeschichte des Erdballs.²³

Of course there is nevertheless a reason for tracing out this essential transfiguration of truth within the philosophy of Plato. On the one hand, Plato stood close enough to the wonderful eruption of the first beginning to still catch a faint echo of the original experience of unconcealment – the experience with which history begins. Although not unambiguously, not unadulteratedly, for him, this was still the meaning of *ἀλήθεια*. On the other hand, it was Plato's conception of *being*, decisive for all subsequent Western history, upon which the transformation of truth hinges, and to which it owes its ensconcing, its entrenchment. Heidegger writes: 'Der Wandel selbst vollzieht sich in der Bestimmung des Seins des Seienden...als *ἰδέα*.'²⁴ And: 'Indem Platon von der *ἰδέα* sagt, sie sei die Herrin, die Unverborgenheit zulasse, verweist er in ein Ungesagtes, daß nämlich fortan sich das Wesen der Wahrheit nicht als das Wesen der Unverborgenheit aus eigener Wesensfülle entfaltet, sondern sich auf das Wesen der *ἰδέα* verlagert.'²⁵ If we are to speak of a chronological transmutation occurring through the work of Plato, then we must refer to his determination of being as *ἰδέα*. For it was with this determination that what Heidegger will call onto-theology begins, which was hitherto unknown: the attempt to explain being in terms of beings. Indeed, this transmutation amounts to an evagination. Whilst for the pre-Socratics, unconcealment as such, *ἀλήθεια*, was the ground of possible visibility, for Plato, the visibility of something, *ἰδέα*, first makes its unconcealment possible. But as such it concerns a happening of the fundamental structurality of being, the structural unfolding of being itself, which is not at all "in" history but which rather first gives history its basic determination, and thus no mere chronologically definable event.²⁶

²² *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 75

²³ *Wegmarken*, p. 237

²⁴ *Wegmarken*, p. 233

²⁵ *Wegmarken*, p. 230

²⁶ We are in substantial agreement with Caputo on this issue of Heidegger's supposed retraction. See his *Demythologizing Heidegger*, pp. 23 f.

It might seem extraordinary that Heidegger places so much philosophical weight on a single allegory. Why should we take it to be paradigmatic for Plato's philosophy as a whole, or, at any rate, for the theory of forms? Is it not perhaps a fortunate coincidence that *visibility* plays such a decisive role here? Could Plato not perhaps have made his philosophical point by means of an allegory that did not employ such a notion?

Heidegger might have responded to such worries by pointing out that they miss the import of his interpretation. It is not the case that he is concerned to convict Plato of propounding through a single apologue a particular metaphysical theory employing ungrounded and problematical conceptions of being and truth, which hold for his philosophy as a whole; that is, Heidegger is not, or at least not simply, taking Plato's simile to be *paradigmatic* of his thought as a whole; rather he is taking it to be *symptomatic* of Plato's thought as a whole. For the conformation of the simile of the cave is only possible given the tectonic of Plato's basic metaphysical picture; this is to say that Plato's thinking constitutively implicates an ambiguity in its concept of truth.

Further, it is not the case that the simile only contingently employs the notion of visibility, as Plato's basic ontological vocabulary attests. The metaphor works so well precisely because Plato's metaphysic already employs visional concepts: *εἶδος* and *ἰδέα*. Indeed, in an important sense *there is no metaphor involved here*, at least not in the same way as is involved in the other similes to be found in the *Republic*. Plato merely retells the metaphysical story in a greater degree of concreteness. We only have to realign the levels, to shift the captives in the cave into the position of those who perceive things in the light of the sun, to get the metaphysical story itself.

Chapter 3:

The Epoch of Metaphysics

The majority of commentators have taken the meaning of metaphysics in Heidegger's sense to be something essentially determined and understood historically. But for us this is not so. Our aim here is not to present a historical account of the epoch in the history of being which Heidegger characterises as metaphysical, our interest is not in the details of the succession of metaphysical thinkers, for example; our aim is rather to determine the structure of the essential categorial constellation of this epoch, that structurality which defines the thinking of all metaphysical thinkers in so far as they are metaphysical. But this is not to say that we take metaphysics to be *merely* defined in terms of a particular structure of thinking, as many other commentators do. For the determination of metaphysical thinking is itself to be grounded in something utterly primordial: a basic structural possibility of being itself.

Heidegger characterises what he calls the epoch of metaphysics in three fundamental, contrasting but interrelated ways: firstly, as the epoch in which truth as correctness reigns – coupled together with a misunderstanding of the being of man; secondly, as the epoch of the forgottenness of being [*Seinsvergessenheit*]; thirdly, as the historical epoch which comes to its essential fulfilment in the development of modern science and, more importantly for our concerns, modern technology. The first of these amounts to a particular conception or understanding of the relation between man and being; the second, to the characterisation of this relation *as such*; the third, to the analysis of their essential historical manifestations. In this chapter we shall deal only with the first two, reserving an exposition of Heidegger's thinking concerning technology for the following chapter.

The epoch of metaphysics begins with a change in the way in which truth holds sway; over two millennia later it has reached its essential fulfilment or culmination [*Vollendung*], it has exhausted the historical possibilities structurally available to it, but this does not mean it has reached its end.

Truth, Time, and the Being of Man

Metaphysics, in Heidegger's sense, can be in the first place characterised as a particular conception of the relation that holds between man and beings. Truth is the name of this relation, and therefore metaphysics, in Heidegger's sense, is to be initially understood in terms of a particular conception of truth. We have already seen how a particular conception of truth corresponds to a particular conception of being.¹ In so far as a particular conception of truth corresponds to a particular conception of being, and in so far as truth is the relation of man to beings, a particular conception of truth also corresponds to a particular conception of man. Finally, in so far as truth corresponds to a particular conception of being, and Heidegger determines time to be the horizon of any possible understanding of being, a particular conception of truth must also correspond to a particular conception of time. It is this constellation of interrelated conceptions – which are in a certain sense *mis*-conceptions – of truth, being, man, and time that forms the core of, and horizon for, what Heidegger calls “metaphysical thinking”. It should be stressed at the outset that these misconceptions are not limited to the familiar history of philosophy; rather, in so far as they involve categories basic to all human dealings with the world, they pervade and determine all forms of human comportment and understanding, all modes in which human beings relate to beings, throughout an entire historical epoch, from ancient Greece to the modern Western world.

We saw *ἀλήθεια*, the original determination of truth, fall away from its inceptual sense, testified by an ambiguity in Plato's theory of forms, to become understood in terms of the correctness of the gaze. This conception of truth crucially implies a relation, in a way in which the original determination does not, a relation conceived in terms of the “correspondence”, or “agreement” pertaining between a matter, state of affairs, or object and a thought, judgement, proposition about or in some sense directed or orientated towards it (*sich richten nach*). The familiar definition of truth that supports the tradition is thus formulated: *veritas est adaequatio intellectus ad rem*. Truth is the correspondence of the intellect to the thing. If, and only if, the intellect in actual fact does correspond to the thing – that is, if what it purports to say, think, etc., about the thing really does accord with the thing –, then the intellect has the property of being true. Truth in this sense belongs to the side of the human comportment. In so far as it is paradigmatically in propositions that the intellect is related to things, truth in this sense is often referred to as propositional truth, and understood to be intrinsically linguistic. The property of being true belongs to propositions. “Correctness” is the name of the particular relation of correspondence that holds between true propositions and things. A proposition is correct if it states how it really is with things. The

¹ Heidegger states this explicitly as early as *Sein und Zeit* §44: ‘für die Aufklärung der Wahrheitsstruktur genügt es nicht, dieses Beziehungs ganze einfach vorauszusetzen, sondern es muß in den Seinszusammenhang zurückgefragt werden, der dieses Ganze als solches trägt.’ [P. 216]

diametric opposite of correctness is falsity. This conception of truth as propositional correctness is the one basically definitive of metaphysics, and is that in which *all* other determinations of metaphysical thinking are grounded.

The traditional *problem* of truth, which is at the same time the central philosophical problematic of metaphysical thinking as such, concerns the way in which the relation that pertains to this determination of truth as correctness should be understood. How exactly is the intellect supposed to “correspond” to the thing? The two are, after all, very different sorts of things. The epistemological problematics that form the core of modern philosophy are perhaps best seen as rooted in the obscurity of this relation. In *Einführung in die Metaphysik* Heidegger places it between *being* and *thinking*, and describes it as that in which ‘wir müssen...jene Grundstellung des Geistes des Abendlandes erkennen’². The “division” [*Scheidung*] between being and thinking corresponding to this relational conception of truth is, for him, the historically necessary and essentially determining ground of the history of the West, prepared already in the inception of philosophy in ancient Greece, and reaching its fulfilment in the epistemological thinking that has dominated philosophy since Descartes. It has essential consequences for the ways in which being and man are respectively understood, and makes man’s history, conceived as the history of the relation between man and beings, first possible. ‘Art und Richtung des Gegensatzes von Sein und Denken sind...so einzigartig, weil hier der Mensch dem Sein ins Angesicht tritt. Dieses Geschehnis ist die wissende Erscheinung des Menschen als des geschichtlichen.’³

The cleavage of being and thinking distends historically at that moment in which being is interpreted as *ἰδέα*, and no longer as *φύσις*. The originary connection of *φύσις* and *λόγος* is sundered and *λόγος* loses its inceptual sense. In accordance with the essence of truth as correctness – within the relationality of which, the scission of being and thinking outspreads – it comes to be understood in terms of *assertion*, as that which stands over against, across from beings, relating to them in their visual presence. Truth as correctness is the correctness of assertion, and thus becomes a property of *λόγος* – a very different nexus to that original bond which united *λόγος* and *ἀλήθεια*; *λόγος* is no longer the gathering together that puts forth into unconcealment, into presence. Being itself comes to be determined from the perspective of assertion and ultimately in terms of the modern concept of rationality⁴; and correspondingly, *λόγος* becomes “externalised” as the “faculty” of reason. This grounds a

² *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 89

³ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 108

⁴ Again the importance for this process of the translation of *λόγος* into *ratio* by the Romans should not be understated.

subservience of being to λόγος: on the basis of λόγος as assertion, being becomes determined according to categories, κατηγορίαι⁵, which delimit all the possibilities of being as such.

The severance of being and thinking determines being to be understood as *that which stands over and against thinking*, that which is *re-presented* by thinking. In so far as λόγος comes to mean assertion, beings come to be understood in terms of the categories of the *object*⁶, grounded ultimately in the Platonic understanding of being as ἰδέα, the objectivity of objects consisting precisely in their offering of a view, of a visible form.

The object offers a view to the subject, the *subiectum*. This word, according to Heidegger, must be understood as a translation of the Greek ὑποκείμενον (meaning that which underlies, the ground which gathers something upon it). The subject, which directly corresponds to the interpretation of being in terms of the object, grounded in the cleaving of being and thinking that is rooted in the relational conception of truth, is to be understood as that interpretation of the being of *man* that is essential to the constellation of the categories of metaphysical thinking. This understanding of the being of man lies at the ground of that locution which entitles man the rational animal and of the modern notion of reason, which determines the subservience of being to man. For as subject, man is that being in reference to which the being of all other beings conceived in terms of objects is determined, that *before which* beings must stand in order that they be beings; for being as the objectivity of objects is being as *Vor-gestelltheit*.

The object is re-presented by the subject. This relation is necessarily conceived as an epistemological relation, that is – and this will turn out to be crucial –, one concerned with the *theoretical* knowledge of objects: the metaphysical subject is essentially detached from any practical involvement with things in the world. Accounting for this theoretical knowledge of objects and determining its scope and limits, its *certainty*⁷, becomes the fundamental task of modern metaphysics, which is thus to be understood as essentially epistemology. Strung between the obverse poles of the epistemological relation, competing idealisms and realisms respectively collapse objectivity into subjectivity and subjectivity into objectivity, whilst leaving the basic categorial scheme of subject and object itself necessarily uninterrogated.

Intrinsically connected to this epistemological understanding of the relation of man to being is the metaphysical conception of the phenomenon of time. As Heidegger writes: ‘Die

⁵ From κατηγορέω, which originally meant “to signify”, “to indicate”, “to prove”, in which Heidegger finds the meaning “to assert”.

⁶ From *obiectus*, a placing against, putting opposite. Cf. also the etymologically equivalent German *Gegen-stand*, literally that which stands against.

⁷ Heidegger sometimes characterises the metaphysical concept of truth *primarily* in terms of certainty [*Gewissheit*] (see, for example, *Nietzsche II*, pp. 383-391). The relation of certainty to correctness is manifest very clearly in the metaphysical philosophy of Descartes, where the method of doubt is used to vet the certainty of beliefs. Certainty is understood as the “subjective” determination of the “objective” relation of correctness; anything that is a certainty is thereby also a truth.

Geschichte des Seins ist in der Epoche der Metaphysik von einem ungedachten Wesen der Zeit durchwaltet.’⁸ The centrality of this thought to Heidegger’s philosophy cannot be over-emphasised, for it is only on the basis of a re-consideration of the phenomenon of time that that fundamental event in the history of being can take place which is the raising of the question of being.

This re-consideration of the phenomenon of time is explicated in the second division of *Sein und Zeit*, where Heidegger develops a phenomenologically grounded existential hermeneutic of primordial temporality. That which Heidegger calls the “vulgar” understanding of time, which is at the same time its metaphysical determination, is shown to be the result of an essential distortion of primordial temporality. For the vulgar understanding, time is to be interpreted as a succession or series of extant “nows”. This view finds its first formulation in Aristotle, whose thematisation of the phenomenon remains decisive for all subsequent philosophical – that is, metaphysical – treatments.

Aristotle’s account of time is encapsulated in the following: ‘For that is what time is: number of change in respect of the before and after.’⁹ For Aristotle, time is essentially connected with *motion* (change, including change of place). It is not the same thing as motion, however, even though time also does not exist without motion; rather, it is connected with motion in so far as it determines motion quantitatively, in so far as it determines motion with respect to the possibility that it can be enumerated, counted, in respect of which it has a number. Clearly, the interpretation of time as the enumerability of motion is only possible as the interpretation of time on the basis of the now, τὸ νῦν, for the nows just are those things that are counted in so far as motion is enumerated in connection with time. Aristotle writes: ‘It is the now that measures time, considered as before and after. [...] The now is the before and after, considered as countable. [...] Time is the number of the motion, and the now is...like a unit of number.’¹⁰

The now, for Aristotle, also makes possible the *continuity* of time, that is, its unity, which consists of a continuous sequence of nows. Time is continuous ‘for it is a number of what is continuous’¹¹, namely, the now. All the determinations of time, all modes of past, present and future, earlier and later, before and after, Aristotle wants to claim, are essentially related to and determined by the now. The temporal dimension of the future is conceived merely as the not-yet-now, and that of the past as the no-longer-now. Time is thus a unidirectional, that is, irreversible, succession of nows. ‘Die Zeit, wie sie Aristoteles herausstellt und wie sie dem gemeinen Bewußtsein bekannt ist, ist eine Abfolge der Jetzt aus

⁸ Einleitung zu: “Was ist Metaphysik?”, *Wegmarken*, p. 377

⁹ *Physics*, Δ, 11, 219b 1

¹⁰ *Physics*, Δ, 11, 219b 12ff

¹¹ *Physics*, Δ, 11, 219b 25

dem Jetzt-noch-nicht in das Jetzt-nicht-mehr, eine Abfolge der Jetzt, die keine beliebige ist, sondern in sich die Richtung aus der Zukunft in die Vergangenheit hat.¹²

On this model, time, and each of the successive nows that constitute it, is understood to exist as objectively present for a theoretical gaze, something that is in being in much the same way perhaps as an objectively present ruler with its marks of measurement. This is the essence of “clock-time”, time determined according to the circular movement of a pointer around a face, on which the nows are counted out in advance. According to this model: ‘Die Jetzt sind... als freischwebend, bezuglos, in sich selbst aneinandergeklammert und in sich selbst abfolgend gedacht.’¹³ Crucially this conception overlooks two particular characteristics of time, which Heidegger grounds phenomenologically: its *significance* and its *datability*.

Significance here can be briefly characterised as that property of time which grounds the possibility that utterances such as ‘it is the right time to...’, or, ‘he arrived at the wrong time for...’, etc, make sense; that is, that time can be appropriate or inappropriate for certain actions, incidents, states of affairs, etc. ‘Die Zeit als rechte Zeit und Unzeit hat den *Charakter der Bedeutsamkeit*.’¹⁴ This concept of significance is grounded in the phenomenological exposition of Heidegger’s concept of world, upon which the entire existential analysis of *Dasein* offered in *Sein und Zeit* rests. It is discussed in detail below.

The datability of time consists in the fact that to every now belongs a “when”: ‘Wenn ich “jetzt” sage, sage ich immer unausgesprochen mit “jetzt, da das und das”. Wenn ich “dann” sage, meine ich immer “dann, wann”. Wenn ich “damals” sage, meine ich “damals, als”. Zu jedem Jetzt gehört ein “da”: jetzt, da das und das. Wir bezeichnen diese Bezugsstruktur des Jetzt als Jetzt-da, des Damals als Damals-als und des Dann als Dann-wann als die Datierbarkeit. Jedes Jetzt datiert sich als “jetzt, da das und das passiert, geschieht oder besteht”.’¹⁵

The common conception of time, which means at the same time the Aristotelian conception, is not able to incorporate these notions of significance and datability. ‘In der vulgären Auslegung der Zeit als Jetzt-folge *fehlt* sowohl die Datierbarkeit als auch die Bedeutsamkeit. Die Charakteristik der Zeit als pures Nacheinander läßt beide Strukturen *nicht* “zum Vorschein kommen”. Die vulgäre Zeitauslegung *verdeckt* sie.’¹⁶ This is because time as a succession of nows is ontologically conceived on the horizon of objective presence, that is, according to the categories of the object apprehended in the purely theoretical gaze of the subject, and these categories are essentially insufficient to ground the *existential* dimension in which something like the structures of significance and datability can first

¹² *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 368

¹³ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 371

¹⁴ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 370

¹⁵ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 370

¹⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 422

appear. Why does the common conception interpret time according to the categories of objective presence?

The common conception, which is *not* to be distinguished from the metaphysical conception, interprets the phenomenon of time according to the categories of objective presence because it interprets beings *as a whole exclusively* according to the categories of the *object*. It interprets beings exclusively according to the categories of the object because these are the only categories of being available to the metaphysical constellation of truth as correctness and subjectivity. The mode of being of the now is in this respect no different for metaphysical thinking than the mode of being of the numbers on the clock, or of the clock itself.

To anticipate our discussion of *Sein und Zeit*, we can at this point intimate that the metaphysical understanding of time essentially and necessarily fails to grasp the *existential* character of time, in which its significance and datability are grounded. This means at the same time that it fails to grasp the essentially existential character of man's understanding of being, thereby fundamentally distorting the relation of man to being. Time, Heidegger will claim, is the ground of the possibility of existentiality as such, and is therefore the ground or horizon of this relation. Intrinsically connected to the non-existential-metaphysical understanding of time, and thus the radically non-existential-metaphysical understanding of the relation of man to being – the subject-object relation –, is also the therein implicated radically non-existential characterisation of the being of man as rational subjectivity and the radically non-existential understanding of beings exclusively in terms of the categories of the object.¹⁷

Seinsvergessenheit

Heidegger characterises the epoch of metaphysics as the epoch of *Seinsvergessenheit*, the epoch of the forgetting of being. Being is forgotten beneath a precedence of beings. What are we to understand by "*Seinsvergessenheit*", and in what connection does it stand to metaphysical thinking?

Seinsvergessenheit is in fact the essence of metaphysical thinking. To see this it is necessary to examine more closely the metaphysical understanding of being and the way it first arises. We have seen how the rupture of being and thinking is essential to the structure of metaphysical thought and how, in accordance with the transformation of the essence of truth, the corresponding categories of object and subject ensue. The metaphysical

¹⁷ The relations of dependence here, between, for example, the interpretation of the being of man as subject and the vulgar interpretation of the being of time, are not an issue; as we have seen, all are

understanding of being is grounded in the category of the object. It has two interrelated aspects. The first is as follows: according to the metaphysico-epistemological characterisation of the relation of man and being in terms of representation, the objectivity of the object – objective presence – is understood to consist in its *Vorgestelltheit* [“representedness”].¹⁸ But *Vorgestelltheit* is a determination of what Heidegger calls “*Vorhandenheit*”. This concept, meaning something like being objectively available, objectively extant, will become a focal theme in the next part. It will suffice at this point merely to say that *Vorhandenheit* is the basic metaphysical determination of the beingness of beings. It determines the being of the subject just as much as the being of the object, and it also determines the being of the relation between them, although, for reasons we shall return to, it originally stems from the categories of the objectivity of the object.

The second aspect follows from this. *Vorhandenheit* is a determination always only of beings. Only beings can be extant in the sense of *Vorhandenheit*. Being *as such* is precisely *never* anything extant in this sense; it is never *anything* at all. This implies what Heidegger calls a “*Vorrang*” [“priority”] of beings in metaphysical thinking.

Putting these two aspects together, in so far as metaphysics only ever understands the relation of man to being in terms of the subject-object relation, and in so far as this relation necessitates an understanding of the beingness of beings in terms of *Vorhandenheit*, which is only applicable to beings and never to being as such, the thinking of being as such is in principle not a possibility for metaphysical thinking. Being is forgotten. ‘Denkt die Metaphysik das Sein selbst? Nein und niemals. Sie denkt *das Seiende* hinsichtlich des Seins. Das Sein ist das zuerst und zuletzt Antwortende auf die Frage, in der stets das Seiende das Befragte bleibt. Das Sein ist als solches nicht das Befragte. Darum bleibt das Sein selbst in der Metaphysik ungedacht, und zwar nicht beiläufig, sondern ihrem eigenen Fragen gemäß.’¹⁹ Put another way, in so far as the subject-object relationship is the only conception of the relation of man to being available to metaphysics, and given that the object is always conceived as a being, man can never be conceived to stand in a relation to being on the basis of which being itself might expressly be drawn into unconcealment. ‘Weil die Metaphysik das Seiende als das Seiende befragt, bleibt sie beim Seienden und Kehrt sich nicht an das Sein als Sein.’²⁰ But why and how does this particular metaphysical understanding of being arise?

A satisfactory answer to this question can only be given after we have elucidated the existential analysis of *Dasein* in *Sein und Zeit*. At this point we can account only for its

embedded, fixed in place, within the basic categorial constellation of metaphysical thinking that is grounded on the relational conception of truth.

¹⁸ ‘Das Sein des Seienden wird in der Vorgestelltheit des Seienden gesucht und gefunden.’ [Die Zeit des Weltbildes, *Holzwege*, p. 83]

¹⁹ *Nietzsche II*, p. 311

²⁰ Einleitung zu: “Was ist Metaphysik?”, *Wegmarken*, p. 366

structural possibility. Truth is to be understood in terms of concealment and unconcealment; being holds sway as a clearing [*Lichtung*] in which beings presence. In so far as beings presence they are unconcealed as regards their being; but with the *unconcealment of beings*, the *concealment* [*Verbergung*] of *being* holds sway. In the presencing of what presences, that which presences is unconcealed but the presencing as such, presence itself, the clearing, is concealed. '[D]ie Unverborgenheit und gerade sie...bleibt im Unterschied zum unverborgenen Anwesenden verborgen.'²¹ This concealment of being, the concealment of the clearing, of presence itself – whose essential possibility belongs to the essence of truth –, and the corresponding unconcealment of that which presences, beings, is rooted in the particular dextral way that *Dasein* is, which will become thematic below. It is because of the way that *Dasein* is that 'der ek-statische Aufenthalt des Menschen in der Offenheit des Anwesens nur dem Anwesenden und der vorhandenen Gegenwärtigung des Anwesenden zugekehrt ist'²² and being is forgotten; that is, concealed. In so far as man is turned only towards what is present, i. e., beings, he takes the mode of his understanding of being exclusively from beings, i. e., determines it according to the extant. The thinking necessary to think being as such is necessarily and essentially excluded from metaphysical thinking: metaphysical thinking is *precisely Seinsvergessenheit*. Beings have precedence; being as such is disbarred from the metaphysical mode of enquiry.

Further, *Seinsvergessenheit* is always at the same time its own forgottenness: 'durch die Metaphysik wird das Vergessen des Seins in die Vergessenheit gestoßen'²³. And: 'Das Ereignis der Vergessenheit läßt nicht nur in die Verborgenheit entfallen, sondern dieses Entfallen selbst entfällt mit in die Verborgenheit, die selber noch bei diesem Fallen wegfällt.'²⁴

'Die Seinsvergessenheit bekundet sich mittelbar darin, daß der Mensch immer nur das Seiende betrachtet und bearbeitet.'²⁵ Being is forgotten in a similar way to the common overseeing of what lies nearest of all; nearest of all – because granting nearness in the first place – is the clearing of being. It is also, however, the clinging to beings, to what is most readily available and familiar, in the midst of what Heidegger calls "*Heimatlosigkeit*", homelessness.²⁶ It is also essentially the failure to raise the *Seinsfrage*, the question of being. Instead, metaphysics determines the category of being as the most general [*allgemeinste*] and the emptiest [*leerste*] of all categories, that without any content, and that without any need or

²¹ *Was Heißt Denken?*, p. 144

²² *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 78

²³ *Besinnung*, p. 218

²⁴ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 44

²⁵ Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, p. 339

²⁶ Importantly related to *Sein und Zeit*'s concept of *Unheimlichkeit* and the later concept of the *Geheimnis*.

possibility of questioning.²⁷ Fundamentally, *Seinsvergessenheit* consists in the failure to draw the *ontological difference* between beings and being: ‘Die Seinsvergessenheit ist die Vergessenheit des Unterschiedes des Seins zum Seienden’²⁸, and: ‘Die hier zu denkende Vergessenheit ist die von der *Λήθη* (Verbergung) her gedachte Verhüllung der Differenz als solcher, welche Verhüllung ihrerseits sich anfänglich entzogen hat. Die Vergessenheit gehört zur Differenz, weil diese jener zugehört.’²⁹ This failure to draw the difference belongs to the essence of metaphysics itself: ‘Die Metaphysik stellt zwar das Seiende in seinem Sein vor und denkt so auch das Sein des Seienden. [I.e., metaphysics attempts to determine the way in which beings are as beings.] Aber sie denkt nicht das Sein als solches, denkt nicht den Unterschied beider. Die Metaphysik fragt nicht nach der Wahrheit des Seins selbst.’³⁰ – For only in so far as the ontological difference is recognised can the truth of being as such be asked about. But: ‘Insofern die Metaphysik das Seiende als solches im Ganzen denkt, stellt sie das Seiende aus dem Hinblick auf das Differente der Differenz vor, ohne auf die Differenz als Differenz zu achten.’³¹

Seinsvergessenheit is itself, however, grounded in something more primordial: *Seinsverlassenheit*. We have already noted that the *structural* possibility of *Seinsvergessenheit* is rooted in the belonging of concealment, *Λήθη*, to the essence of truth. Earlier we saw how this concept of concealment determined the Greek understanding of being as *φύσις* – emerging sway. On this point we quoted Heraclitus: *φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ*. From this it becomes apparent that as regards the concealment that determines the forgetting of being, it is being *itself* that conceals itself, being itself *withdraws* itself, leaving beings alone unconcealed. ‘Das Seyn ist nicht einfach nur verborgen – sondern es entzieht und verbirgt sich.’³² The withdrawal [*Entzug*] of being from beings is the abandonment [*Verlassenheit*] of beings by being: ‘Das Sein hat das Seiende verlassen.’³³ Being abandons beings in so far as beings presence, are unconcealed, other than in the light of being’s truth, other than in the light of that presence, that unconcealment itself. Beings presence without regard for being, without regard for their presencing; being *refuses* itself [*verweigert sich*]. This refusal is not to be conceived as a *departure* of being; beings still are after all; rather, being refuses itself, withdraws, in so far as it conceals itself amidst beings, perhaps beneath beings, perhaps

²⁷ Cf. *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 3–4.

²⁸ Der Spruch des Anaximander, *Holzwege*, p. 336 Originally italicised.

²⁹ *Identität und Differenz*, pp. 40–41

³⁰ Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, p. 322

³¹ *Identität und Differenz*, pp. 62–63

³² *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 210 What does Heidegger mean to imply with his archaic spelling “*Seyn*”? It is usually supposed that this has something to do with the way in which the ontological difference holds sway in any given epoch of the history of being. Much more simply put, though, *Seyn* is used when Heidegger’s ontological perspective is that of the history of being. There is no contentful difference between *Sein* and *Seyn*, only one of perspective: *Seyn* is the “*seinsgeschichtliche Bestimmung*” of *Sein*.

within beings. Of course, this abandonment of beings by being is at the same time the withdrawal of being from *thinking*. *Seinsverlassenheit* is thus the ground of *Seinsvergessenheit*.

Seinsverlassenheit is the *seinsgeschichtliche* essence of metaphysics: 'Die Seinsverlassenheit: sie muß als das Grundgeschehnis unserer Geschichte erfahren und ins Wissen gehoben werden.'³⁴ At the very beginning of Western history – just at that very moment when, we are told³⁵, unconcealment as such was first *experienced* – being withdrew itself and beings took on their priority. This was the beginning of the epoch of metaphysical thinking, which thinks only beings and never being in its truth; that is, the beginning of the epoch of *Seinsvergessenheit*. But this is the beginning of the history of being: 'Die Geschichte des Seins beginnt und zwar notwendig mit der Vergessenheit des Seins.'³⁶

It is on the basis of *Seinsverlassenheit* that beings reveal themselves as mere objects, extant entities for a subject, without regard to their presencing as such, which is therefore the ground of the mode of the revealing of beings essential to metaphysical representation. Being has withdrawn itself from beings, concealed itself in their openness, and beings appear as if being did not hold sway. This character of self-withdrawing-concealing belongs to the determination of being as such, and only on the basis of it can we understand the sense in which truth is *ἀλήθεια*. Being's essential withdrawal is the ground of the determination of truth in terms of correctness and certainty, and for the determination of the human essence in terms of the subject.

But as that which grounds Western history, as the essential movement of the history of being, the withdrawal of being from beings is to be conceived in terms of what Heidegger calls a *Geschick*. What does *Geschick* mean? *Ge-schick* is a *sending*. In the counter-movement of its withdrawal, being *sends* to mankind a historically specific way in which beings come to unconcealment, a mode of revealing in which everything that is comes to presence. This underlies the succession of interpretations of beingness throughout the historical course of metaphysics – as, for example, *substantia*, extension, position, spirit, will, will-to-power, will-to-will, etc. Whilst Heidegger is unclear on this, it is possible to conceive of each of these as grounded in a different *Geschick* of being.

In this case there is, for Heidegger, a *plurality* of *Geschicke*. Nevertheless, Heidegger is quite clear, contrary to the view of the majority of his commentators, that there is *only one epoch* in the history of being: the epoch of metaphysics. When Heidegger writes in the *Einleitung zu "Was ist Metaphysik?"* that: 'Die Geschichte des Seins ist in der Epoche der Metaphysik von einem ungedachten Wesen der Zeit durchwaltet', he appends to the word

³³ *Die Geschichte des Seins*, p. 36

³⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 112

³⁵ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 189

“*Metaphysik*” the following note: ‘Diese Epoche ist die ganze Geschichte des Seins.’³⁷ As we shall see, there are essential reasons why there can only be one epoch in the history of being. But what does Heidegger mean by *Epoch*?

Clearly his use of this word is very different to that of Husserl; nevertheless, the root meaning is the same. *Εποχή* comes from *ἐπέχω*, meaning to keep in, to hold back, to check. *Εποχή* has, accordingly, as its root meaning something like *refusal*. The *ἐποχή* is the *withdrawal* of being. This withdrawal – as the finitude of being’s unconcealment – is what grounds history. There couldn’t *be* history if being gave itself all at once in its truth. This is why, as we shall see, history ends with the ending of the epoch of metaphysics. The epochal character of being – which is the same as the essentially temporal character of being – is what first makes the *Geschick* possible. The *Geschick* is what is historically sent by being precisely in so far as it withdraws in its truth; a way of revealing is sent, but not revealing itself, not revealing in its truth.

We say a way of revealing is *sent*. This is almost always taken by commentators to imply a sort of *agency* on the part of being. One point at which the significance of our structural reading of Heidegger comes out very strongly is in our denial of this view. The sending of being is not to be understood as agential³⁸ in any sense whatsoever. To begin with, being does not *do* anything; how can it if it is not a being? With the sending of being, nothing is *done*. If we are begging the question in characterising the common view in this way, then we can state our charge more generally by saying that the *Geschick* is in no way a product, result or effect of any *spontaneity*. Rather, it is the simple consequence of the necessary temporal unfolding of the ontological structurality which presides necessarily over all that is in so far as it is. That being can *send* anything can only be understood once this sending is conceived wholly in terms of the unfolding of the essential structure of being. How this structure is finally to be characterised will become clearer below.

The progression of the metaphysical determinations of being through history is not at all to be understood in terms of a causal nexus; one *Geschick* does not *cause* the next: ‘Sein verläuft nicht und nie in einem kausalem Wirkungszusammenhang. Der Weise, wie es, das Sein selber, sich schickt, geht nichts Bewirkendes als Sein voraus und folgt keine Wirkung als Sein nach.’³⁹ But this does not make them random or arbitrary; rather, as the unfolding of the structure of being’s withdrawal, their progression is to be determined as an increasing *Seinsvergessenheit*.⁴⁰ As Heidegger affirms in the protocol to the seminar on *Zeit und Sein*:

³⁶ Nietzsches Wort “Gott ist tot”, *Holzwege*, p. 243

³⁷ *Wegmarken*, p. 377

³⁸ From Latin *ago*, to set in motion, to drive.

³⁹ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 43

⁴⁰ Our structural reading of Heidegger’s history of being does not allow the thesis shared by perhaps the majority of commentators that this history is to be understood as a series of diachronic, spontaneous

‘Innerhalb des Daß und in seinem Sinne kann das Denken auch so etwas wie Notwendigkeit in der Abfolge, so etwas wie eine Gesetzlichkeit und Logik feststellen. So läßt sich sagen, daß die Seinsgeschichte die Geschichte der sich steigernden Seinsvergessenheit ist.’⁴¹

In so far as the *Geschick* is sent to mankind as the withdrawal of being, it is not possible to attribute to him the culpability for metaphysical thinking. It is important not to read Heidegger as somehow blaming Western mankind for some sort of mistake or neglect. ‘Die Metaphysik selbst wäre...kein bloßes Versäumnis einer noch zu bedenkenden Frage nach dem Sein. Sie wäre vollends kein Irrtum. Die Metaphysik wäre als Geschichte der Wahrheit des Seienden als solchen aus dem Geschick des Seins selbst ereignet.’⁴² Nevertheless, as we shall see, metaphysics is itself the history of error as such in so far as it is the history of the withdrawal of being in its *truth*. As epochal, i. e., having to do with the withdrawal of being, history is essentially the history of error. ‘Jede Epoche der Weltgeschichte ist eine Epoche der Irre’⁴³, claims Heidegger. This is so, in so far as error is essential to the structure of truth. ‘Die Irre ist das wesentliche Gegenwesen zum anfänglichen Wesen der Wahrheit.’⁴⁴ This becomes focused below.

In *Beiträge zur Philosophie* Heidegger characterises *Seinsverlassenheit* as determining the unconcealment of beings in three ways: in terms of *Berechnung*, *Schnelligkeit*, and the *Aufbruch des Massenhaften*. These three determinations of *Seinsverlassenheit* belong to what Heidegger designates as the *nihilism* of the modern world: ‘Die Seinsverlassenheit ist der Grund und damit zugleich die ursprünglichere Wesensbestimmung dessen, was Nietzsche erstmals als Nihilismus erkannt hat.’⁴⁵

Nihilism, for Heidegger, is the necessary result of over two millennia of metaphysical thinking. Western history essentially tends towards nihilism: ‘Der Nihilismus ist, in seinem Wesen gedacht,...die Grundbewegung der Geschichte des Abendlandes.’⁴⁶ Its essential ground lies in metaphysical thinking itself; metaphysics is itself in essence nihilistic. ‘Die Metaphysik ist als Metaphysik der eigentliche Nihilismus.’⁴⁷ It is first brought to philosophical consciousness in Nietzsche’s proclamation that “*Gott ist tot*”. Nietzsche understands the essence of nihilism to be the loss of value of the highest value – namely, God

and arbitrary “aletheiological constellations”. This is Reiner Schürmann’s phrase, whose *Heidegger on Being and Acting* is posited upon this conception. Once it is understood in this way no sense can be made of Heidegger’s *first* beginning, in contradistinction from his other beginning or indeed any other episodic transmutation, and consequently the *history* of being dissipates. In Schürmann’s terminology there would be no historical difference between the “original” and the “originary”. Instead the history of being must be taken to be the structural unfolding of being’s withdrawal.

⁴¹ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 56

⁴² Nietzsches Wort “Gott ist tot”, *Holzwege*, p. 244

⁴³ Der Spruch des Anaximander, *Holzwege*, p. 338 Nothing hangs here on the fact that Heidegger appears to use *Epoche* in the plural.

⁴⁴ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 197

⁴⁵ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 119

⁴⁶ Nietzsches Wort “Gott ist tot”, *Holzwege*, p. 201

– and thus ceasing to be determinative, and for him, just as for Heidegger, nihilism is the end result of the inner logic, the metaphysics, or rather the *Platonism*, of Western history.

We have already seen in what sense metaphysics is essentially theological.⁴⁸ The nihilistic completion of the history of metaphysics comes when the belief in God is no longer a possibility, when, as Heidegger puts it, “the gods have fled” – when the dimension of the holy has closed itself up. At this point metaphysical thinking has exhausted its historical possibilities and revealed its essentially nihilistic essence. This essence consists in placing all value beyond the world, that is, in emptying the world of value (a figure of thought that is first recognisable in Plato), and by attributing all value to a being, albeit the “highest” being. But for Heidegger, the inevitable loss of value of the highest value, which historically grounds nihilism, is only possible in the first place upon the basis of an understanding of the world in terms of this concept of “value”, which is intrinsically grounded in the central categorial constellation of metaphysical – and therefore nihilistic – thinking. The possibility of nihilism rests paradoxically in the concept of value.

In his *Zur Seinsfrage*, Heidegger writes: ‘Das Wesen des Nihilismus...beruht in der Seinsvergessenheit.’⁴⁹ Nihilism comes to hold sway over Western history *in so far as the truth of being is forgotten*; that is, in so far as being has withdrawn itself in its truth. ‘Aus dem Geschick des Seins gedacht, bedeutet das nihil des Nihilismus, daß es mit dem Sein nichts ist. Das Sein kommt nicht an das Licht seines eigenen Wesens. Im Erscheinen des Seienden als solchen bleibt das Sein selbst aus. Die Wahrheit des Seins entfällt. Sie bleibt vergessen.’⁵⁰

Nihilism is, for Heidegger, the completion of the history of metaphysics manifested as an absolute *Seinsvergessenheit*. In so far as it is first diagnosed by Nietzsche, he is to be understood, according to Heidegger, as the last metaphysical thinker.⁵¹ He is the last

⁴⁷ *Nietzsche II*, p. 309 Originally italicised.

⁴⁸ The theological essence of metaphysics is ultimately to be understood as grounded in *Seinsverlassenheit*: ‘*Seinsverlassenheit* des Seienden: daß das Seyn vom Seienden sich zurückgezogen und das Seiende zunächst (christlich) nur zu dem von anderem Seienden Gemachten wurde. Das oberste Seiende als Ursache alles Seienden übernahm das Wesen des Seyns.’ [*Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 111]

⁴⁹ *Wegmarken*, p. 422

⁵⁰ Nietzsches Wort “Gott ist tot”, *Holzwege*, p. 244

⁵¹ ‘*Nietzsche* ist im wesentlichen Sinne das Ende der abendländischen Philosophie.’ [*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 133] What then is the place of Heidegger’s teacher Husserl? Heidegger no doubt considered Husserl’s thinking to mark no advance on that of Nietzsche; it is after all expressly orientated according to the Cartesian programme, which Heidegger saw as the hall-mark of metaphysical thinking. Nevertheless, for the length of his life, Heidegger never abandoned the claim that philosophy must be phenomenological. He located phenomenology, however, beyond the programme of his mentor. According to Heidegger’s understanding of it, phenomenology is post-metaphysical, and therefore a crucial historical contribution to thinking. Indeed, whilst always hermeneutically understood, phenomenology provides Heidegger with an *entry-point* into history; that necessary entry-point which allows him to formulate a theory of history in the first place. Whilst it does not stand beyond the structures of history altogether, phenomenology first makes possible an

metaphysical thinker because with his decisive reaction against metaphysical philosophy he fulfils the last of the possibilities intrinsic to metaphysical thought. For Heidegger, however, metaphysical thinking is the same as philosophical thinking; thus: 'Mit Nietzsches Metaphysik ist die Philosophie vollendet. Das will sagen: sie hat den Umkreis der vorgezeichneten Möglichkeiten abgeschritten.'⁵² In the next chapter we shall look in more detail at the ways in which the nihilism of the modern world manifests itself and the nature of the danger it poses to historical man before examining Heidegger's conception of the continuation of the history of being and the possibilities left to thinking – the possibilities essential to thinking – beyond the epochal fulfilment of metaphysics.

authentic understanding of these structures. The question of the extent to which Heidegger recognises the historicity of his own thought is a complicated one and shall be returned to.

⁵² Überwindung der Metaphysik, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 79

Chapter 4:

The Danger: das Ge-stell

In 1949 Heidegger presented a series of four lectures in Bremen under the title *Einblick in Das Was Ist*. Much of the material of these lectures was subsequently re-worked and published in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*¹ and *Die Technik und die Kehre*, although the original text has now been published in volume 79 of Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe*. More than any other texts, these have been taken to define the work of the "later" Heidegger. Fundamentally, these lectures attempted to determine the essence of the current stage of Western European history and to root this essence within the context of the unfolding of the history of being. In part this attempt took the form of a reflection on modern technology. Throughout this section we shall focus almost exclusively on the text of the lecture *Die Frage nach der Technik*.

This lecture attempts to bring to light the *essence* of modern technology, to determine the way in which it is a "*danger*", and to show in what sense there is the possibility of being saved from the danger. In this chapter we shall investigate the first two points.

What is technology? In the first instance it might be characterised as something having to do with instrumentality, with means and ends. In order to grasp the essence of technology, then, it might be thought that one must first consider what instrumentality is. Fundamental to instrumentality is *causation*: means relate to ends only in virtue of causes, perhaps a series of causes. Traditionally four causes have been recognised, in origin traceable to Aristotle's analysis of the four αἰτίαι: *causa materialis*, *causa formalis*, *causa finalis*, and *causa efficiens*. Αἰτίον refers to that which is *responsible* for something – that which is responsible for *bringing something forth into appearance*. It is this "bringing something forth into appearance" which determines the unity of these 'vier Weisen des Verschuldens', that which defines each of them as αἰτίον, and therefore defines the essence of the Greek understanding of "cause". As we shall see, for Heidegger, this connection of coming into appearance, of coming into presence, with instrumentality, with means and ends, runs very deep indeed. Bringing forth into appearance is to be understood in terms of an emerging out

of concealment into unconcealment. The Greek word denoting the structure of emergence into unconcealment is 'αλήθεια, "truth".

Technology is something having to do with instrumentality. Instrumentality, grounded in means and ends, is something having to do with causality. But, as we have now seen, causality is something having to do with emergence into appearance, with revealing. Heidegger therefore makes the claim that: 'Die Technik ist eine Weise des Entbergens. Die Technik west in dem Bereich, wo Entbergen und Unverborgenheit, wo 'αλήθεια, wo Wahrheit geschieht.'² This accords the meaning of technology with the originary meaning of τέχνη, from τίκτω, meaning to bring into the world, to bring forth, to beget, to generate, to produce. Τέχνη is a revealing, one qualified according to ποίησις, to make, to create.

In what sense is modern technology a way of revealing? 'Das in der modernen Technik waltende Entbergen ist ein Herausfordern, das an die Natur das Ansinnen stellt, Energie zu liefern, die als solche herausgefordert und gespeichert werden kann.'³ This, Heidegger wants to say, contrasts modern technology with all previous types of technology. The difference concerns the character of modern technology as a "setting-upon" [*stellen*] nature, which is perhaps best captured by the notion of *exploitation*. All previous technologies may have used nature, but they did not, could not, exploit it in the way in which mechanised modern technology can do. The ancient farmer would place his seeds in the care of the processes of growth, not force by manipulation and violation these processes to work necessarily for his advantage. That he could not do. He was subject to the natural processes, rather than the natural processes themselves being made subject to him. The character of setting-upon nature, in the sense of "challenging-forth" [*herausfordern*], determines the way of revealing of modern technology. It involves the unlocking of the energy concealed in nature, its transformation into other energy forms, its being stored, its being distributed, and finally its being put to use in myriad ways. According to it, beings are unconcealed in terms of what Heidegger calls *Bestand*, a good translation being "resource" or even better "stock" or "inventory". *Bestand* is the material kept in the store rooms of a factory, for example, for future use in production. 'Er ["Bestand"] kennzeichnet nichts geringeres als die Weise, wie alles anwest, was vom herausfordernden Entbergen betroffen wird.'⁴ Heidegger's thought is that in the modern technological world *all* beings are understood, that is, *revealed* as *Bestand*, as mere material on hand for technological use. Indeed, man himself is not exempt from this way of the revealing of beings. He is something to be measured in terms of human resources.

The way of revealing on the basis of which what is unconcealed is determined according to *Bestand* Heidegger names *das Ge-stell*. 'Ge-stell heißt das Versammelnde jenes

¹ Cf. the essays *Die Frage nach der Technik* and *Das Ding*.

² *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 13

³ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 14

Stellens, das den Menschen stellt, d. h. herausfordert, das Wirkliche in der Weise des Bestellens als Bestand zu entbergen. Ge-stell heißt die Weise des Entbergens, die im Wesen der modernen Technik waltet und selber nichts Technisches ist.’⁵

In the word “*Ge-stell*”, Heidegger insists, should not only be heard the “*stellen*”⁶, the “setting-upon”, which we introduced earlier; another “*stellen*” should also be heard, one that also sounds in the German *dar-stellen* and *her-stellen*, namely, that “*stellen*” that echoes *ποίησις* – the bringing into unconcealment of what presences in creating and making. *Ge-stell* is a mode or way of unconcealment, of *ἀλήθεια*, and to this extent it signifies the *being* of beings: ‘Das Wesen der Technik ist das Seyn selber in der Wesensgestalt des Ge-stells.’⁷⁸

As Heidegger famously claims, the essence of technology is not itself technological. Nor is it anything of human making. Man is not related to the essence of technology as any other object might be, of course: technology has something essentially to do with human doings and practices. But Heidegger insists that it is not reducible to these. Rather, the way of revealing according to which the actual is brought to unconcealment as *Bestand*, is to be

⁴ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 16

⁵ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 20, which in the original lectures was expressed in terms of ‘die Verwahrlosung des Dinges als Ding’, conceived as the ‘Verweigerung von Welt’. See below.

⁶ Generalised absolutely with the *Ge-* prefix.

⁷ *Die Gefahr, Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 62. The progenitor of *Ge-stell* was the concept of *Machenschaft*. [Cf. *Nietzsche II*, p. 445, footnote a: “*Machenschaft*” der vorläufige Name für das Ge-Stell.] Heidegger writes: ‘Dieses Wort nennt jenes Wesen des Seins, das alles Seiende in die Machbarkeit und Machsamkeit entscheidet...Metaphysikgeschichtlich erläutert sich die Machenschaft durch die *Seiendheit* als Vor-gestelltheit’ [*Die Geschichte des Seyns*, p. 46]. It designates thus the metaphysical interpretation of the being of beings, grounded in *Seinsvergessenheit* and *Seinsverlassenheit*. At the apogee of metaphysical thinking all beings are interpreted in terms of *Machenschaft*. In this word is not only to be heard the German *machen* [to make] as the human comportment that grounds modern technology (‘Technik ist die Herstellung des Seienden selbst...in die berechenbare Machbarkeit, die Machsamkeit durchmachende Machenschaft.’ [*Besinnung*, p. 173]); the German *Macht* [power] is also to be implicated. Heidegger writes: ‘Die Machenschaft ist die unbedingte Vollendung des Seins als des Willens zur Macht.’ [*Metaphysik und Nihilismus*, p. 150]. We shall not pursue the reference to Nietzsche here, nor the pre-eminent position accorded to him by Heidegger within the history of metaphysics. The interpretation of beings in terms of *Machenschaft* is connected to the Christian conception of the creator God: beings are understood as made-beings: ‘In der Machenschaft liegt...die christlich-biblische Auslegung des Seienden als *ens creatum*’ [*Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 132]. It is also necessarily connected, claims Heidegger, to the traditional concept of experience [*Erlebnis*], the two concepts together naming that formation of thought which we introduced before as the fundamental separation of being and thinking that holds sway across the entire sweep of Western history.

⁸ Importantly, but unsurprisingly, *Ge-stell*, in so far as it primarily determines the revealing of *nature* in terms of *Bestand*, also determines the way of revealing that holds sway in modern mathematical physics. ‘Die neuzeitliche Wissenschaft gründet im Wesen der Technik.’ [*Was Heißt Denken?*, p. 155]. Indeed, one further essential difference of modern technologies from all previous technologies is the fact that they employ mathematical physics as an exact science. The relation between modern technology and mathematical physics is at one level reciprocal: modern technology is of course founded on developments in the mathematical sciences, but equally developments in the mathematical sciences often rest upon technological progress. They both, however, share the same essence, Heidegger wants to claim: ‘das herausfordernde Versammeln in das bestellende Entbergen waltet bereits in der [neuzeitlichen] Physik.’ [*Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 21]. Indeed, the possibility of modern mathematical science rests on the revealing of nature in terms of *Ge-stell*, which is therefore something earlier than the manifestations of modern technology.

understood according to what we previously introduced under the name *Geschick*. The *Geschick* is the determination of the truth of being, that is, the way in which beings are revealed, that holds sway as the epoch of the history of being. The *Geschick* is something sent to man: historical man himself does not determine the ways in which unconcealment holds sway; rather, man is himself claimed by the particular revealing determined at any time in terms of the *Geschick*. *Ge-stell* is a *Geschick* of being. ‘Als die Herausforderung ins Bestellen schickt das Ge-stell in eine Weise des Entbergens. Das Ge-stell ist eine Schickung des Geschickes wie jede Weise des Entbergens. Geschick in dem genannten Sinne ist auch das Her-vor-bringen, die *ποίησις*.’⁹ Indeed, *Ge-stell* is the *Geschick* of being that holds sway in the fulfilment of the epoch of *Seinsvergessenheit*: ‘Das Wesen des Ge-stells ist das Sein selber des Seienden; nicht überhaupt und nicht von jeher, sondern jetzt, da sich die Vergessenheit des Wesens des Seins vollendet.’¹⁰ *Ge-stell* and *Seinsvergessenheit* belong essentially together.

Now Heidegger describes *Ge-stell*, in so far as it is a *Geschick*, as a “*Gefahr*”, a danger, in fact “*die höchste Gefahr*”. He means that man is endangered by *Ge-stell* in his essence. What does this mean and why is this? Heidegger writes:

Das Wesen der Technik beruht im Ge-stell. Sein Walten gehört in das Geschick. Weil dieses den Menschen jeweils auf einen Weg des Entbergens bringt, geht der Mensch, also unterwegs, immerfort am Rande der Möglichkeit, nur das im Bestellen Entborgene zu verfolgen und zu betreiben und von da her alle Masse zu nehmen. Hierdurch verschließt sich die andere Möglichkeit, daß der Mensch eher und mehr und stets anfänglicher auf das Wesen des Unverborgenen und seine Unverborgenheit sich einläßt, um die gebrauchte Zugehörigkeit zum Entbergen als sein Wesen zu erfahren.

Zwischen diese Möglichkeiten gebracht, ist der Mensch aus dem Geschick her gefährdet. Das Geschick der Entbergung ist als solches in jeder seiner Weisen und darum notwendig *Gefahr*.

In welcher Weise auch immer das Geschick der Entbergung walten mag, die Unverborgenheit, in der alles, was ist, sich jeweils zeigt, birgt die Gefahr, daß der Mensch sich am Unverborgenen versieht und es mißdeutet.¹¹

⁹ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 24

¹⁰ *Die Gefahr, Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 51

¹¹ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, pp. 25-26 Compare also with this passage:

Vorerst allerdings – wissen wir nicht wie lange – befindet sich der Mensch auf dieser Erde in einer gefährlichen Lage. Weshalb? Nur deshalb, weil unversehens ein dritter Weltkrieg ausbrechen könnte, der die völlige Vernichtung der Menschheit und die Zerstörung der Erde zur Folge hätte? Nein. Es droht im anbrechenden Atomzeitalter eine Weit größere Gefahr – gerade dann, wenn die Gefahr eines dritten Weltkrieges beseitigt ist. Eine seltsame Behauptung. Allerdings, aber nur solange seltsam, als wir nicht nachdenken.

Inwiefern gilt der soeben ausgesprochene Satz? Er gilt insofern, als die im Atomzeitalter anrollende Revolution der Technik den Menschen auf eine Weise fesseln, behexen, blenden und

We are told that 'Das Geschick der Entbergung ist als solches in jeder seiner Weisen und darum notwendig *Gefahr*.' The essential structure of *Geschick* is in itself endangering. In what sense is it endangering? In the sense that in virtue of any possible *Geschick* '[die Möglichkeit] verschließt sich..., daß der Mensch eher und mehr und stets anfänglicher auf das Wesen des Unverborgenen und seine Unverborgenheit sich einläßt, um die gebrauchte Zugehörigkeit zum Entbergen als sein Wesen zu erfahren.' *Geschick* is a danger because in terms of its very structure as a way of revealing it grounds the possibility that revealing as such is concealed from man and only what is unconcealed, in the specificity of the *Geschick*, is revealed; that is, in its very nature it grounds the possibility that unconcealment as such is concealed from man and therefore that man does not experience his essence *as a belonging to unconcealment as such*. But: 'Das Geschick der Entbergung ist in sich nicht irgendeine, sondern *die Gefahr*.' We can therefore characterise the essence of danger for Heidegger to be the concealment of unconcealment as such from the historical experience of man.¹²

'Waltet jedoch das Geschick in der Weise des Ge-stells, dann ist es die höchste Gefahr.'¹³ This claim is clarified by three considerations. The first is that what is revealed as *Bestand* is not even experienced in terms of the object. This implies that man cannot even be taken as a subject. Instead, there is the danger that he too is understood exclusively as *Bestand*. The second is that at the same time, in virtue of the instrumentality characterising *Bestand*, man comes to lord it over all beings, that is, over the whole of what is unconcealed as such, and comes to understand all things as merely products of his construction. This gives rise to the illusion that he everywhere encounters only himself, when it is rather the case, as Heidegger insists, that 'indessen begegnet der Mensch heute in Wahrheit gerade nirgends mehr sich selber, d. h. seinem Wesen.'¹⁴ The final consideration is that, 'Wo [das Ge-stell] herrscht, vertreibt es jede andere Möglichkeit der Entbergung. Vor allem verbirgt das Ge-stell jenes Entbergen, das im Sinne der *ποίησις* das Anwesende ins Erscheinen her-vor-kommen läßt.' The way of revealing of *Ge-stell* drives out all possibility of other ways of revealing. But this has the fundamental consequence, most importantly of all, that, 'So verbirgt denn das herausfordernde Ge-stell nicht nur eine vormalige Weise des Entbergens,

verblenden könnte, daß eines Tages das rechnende Denken *als das einzige* in Geltung und Übung bliebe.

Welche große Gefahr zöge dann herauf? Dann ginge mit dem höchsten und erfolgreichsten Scharfsinn des rechnenden Plannens und Erfindens – die Gleichgültigkeit gegen das Nachdenken, die totale Gedankenlosigkeit zusammen. Und dann? Dann hätte der Mensch sein Eigenstes, daß er nämlich ein nachdenkendes Wesen ist, verleugnet und weggeworfen. Darum gilt es, dieses Wesen des Menschen zu retten. Darum gilt es, das Nachdenken wach zu halten. [*Gelassenheit*, pp. 24-25]

¹² As we shall see, this is to be associated with "error", *die Irre*. 'Das Wesen der Irre beruht im Wesen des Seyns als der Gefahr.' [Die Gefahr, *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 54]

¹³ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 26

¹⁴ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 27 Originally italicised.

das Her-vor-bringen, sondern es verbirgt das Entbergen als solches und mit ihm Jenes, worin sich Unverborgenheit, d. h. Wahrheit ereignet.'

The way of revealing of *Ge-stell* blocks out the holding sway and the shining-forth of truth as such.¹⁵ It is therefore the supreme danger, and it itself conceals itself *as* a danger. Thus the danger is not technology itself, not its destructive atomic capacities for example; rather, the *essence* of technology as a *Geschick* of a way of revealing is the danger. 'Die Bedrohung des Menschen kommt nicht erst von den möglicherweise tödlich wirkenden Maschinen und Apparaturen der Technik. Die eigentliche Bedrohung hat den Menschen bereits in seinem Wesen angegangen. Die Herrschaft des Ge-stells droht mit der Möglichkeit, daß dem Menschen versagt sein könnte, in ein ursprünglicheres Entbergen einzukehren und so den Zuspruch einer anfänglicheren Wahrheit zu erfahren.'¹⁶ This amounts, Heidegger claims in the second volume of his Nietzsche lectures, to the danger of the *annihilation* [*Vernichtung*] of the essence of the human.¹⁷

To every danger belongs a need [*Not*]. In the case of *Ge-stell*, the need conceals itself, just like the danger – the need is not experienced *as* a need. Of course, in the age of modern technology one experiences and learns about many needs and sufferings, but *the* need, the one correlative with the greatest danger, is not experienced, and instead "needlessness"[*Notlosigkeit*] holds sway. Heidegger writes: 'In Wahrheit, jedoch verhüllter Weise, ist die Notlosigkeit die eigentliche Not.'¹⁸ But in so far as the withdrawal of being is the holding sway of being itself, the need is itself the holding sway of being. 'Diese Not gehört zur Wahrheit des Seyns selbst.'¹⁹ Being holds sway as the need. At the same time, in accordance with the greatest danger, the need is the need of the human essence. For, as we shall see more clearly below, the essence of man is to disclose being as such for the safeguarding of its truth: mankind is essentially the *guardian* [*Wächter*] of being, the shepherd of being.

¹⁵ In so far as truth here is to be conceived in terms of the truth of being it is in this sense that *Ge-stell* is the fulfilment of *Seinsvergessenheit*.

¹⁶ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 28

¹⁷ Cf. *Nietzsche II*, pp. 355 ff.

¹⁸ *Die Gefahr, Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 56

¹⁹ *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 153

Chapter 5:

Other Beginnings

Ge-stell is the *Geschick* of being in the age of technology. It is the fundamental danger. Heidegger claims that we can be *saved* from this danger but that salvation requires a radically new beginning in the history of being, a fundamental turn or reversal, *Kehre*, of history. What does this *Kehre* amount to and how might it come about?

Ge-stell determines the revealing of beings in the epoch of *Seinsvergessenheit*; *Seinsvergessenheit* is grounded in *Seinsverlassenheit*, the refusal of being of itself. The *Kehre* is the turn in being itself whereby it no longer refuses itself, but instead grants or sends itself in its truth to hold sway over all revealing. Beings presence in the light of the truth of being rather than in the darkness of being's absence. As the turn out of *Seinsverlassenheit*, the *Kehre* is the overcoming of *Seinsvergessenheit*.

The *Kehre* is the *Kehre* of being itself. Heidegger insists that it cannot be conceived to be a human doing or achievement. He writes: 'Wenn das Wesen der Technik, das Gestell als die Gefahr im Sein, das Sein selbst ist, dann läßt sich die Technik niemals durch ein bloß auf sich gestelltes menschliches Tun meistern, weder positiv noch negativ. Die Technik, deren Wesen das Sein selbst ist, läßt sich durch den Menschen niemals überwinden.'¹ It cannot be brought about as an effect of anything else, and cannot be calculated in advance: 'Wenn in der Gefahr sich die Kehre ereignet, kann dies nur unvermittelt geschehen. Denn das Sein hat nicht seinesgleichen neben sich. Es wird nicht von anderem bewirkt, noch wirkt es selbst. Sein verläuft nicht und nie in einem kausalen Wirkungszusammenhang.'² And when it happens, it happens suddenly.

But although the *Kehre* is no human doing, nevertheless man as historical, as the preserver of presence, is implicated in it, and plays, claims Heidegger, a necessary role in its preparation: 'Weil jedoch das Sein sich als Wesen der Technik in das Gestell geschickt hat, zum Wesen des Seins aber das Menschenwesen gehört, insofern das Wesen des Seins das Menschenwesen braucht, um als Sein nach dem eigenen Wesen inmitten des Seienden

¹ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 38

² *Die Technik und die Kehre*, pp. 42-43

gewahrt zu bleiben und so *als* das Sein zu wesen, deshalb kann das Wesen der Technik nicht ohne die Mithilfe des Menschenwesens in den Wandel seines Geschickes geleitet werden.’³ Being *needs* [*braucht*] the essence of man. ‘Das große Wesen des Menschen denken wir dahin, daß es dem Wesen des Seins zugehört, von diesem gebraucht ist, das Wesen des Seins in seine Wahrheit zu wahren.’⁴

‘Der Brauch ist...selber der Anspruch, daß etwas in sein Wesen eingelassen werde und das Brauchen nicht davon ablasse. Brauchen ist: Einlassen in das Wesen, ist Wahrung im Wesen.’⁵ In so far as it is the essence of man to be the guardian of being, the *Kehre* of being itself and the turn of historical mankind into his essence can only take place together. Thus before the *Kehre* can take place, before being can be unconcealed in its truth, mankind must be fully prepared for his distinguished role as being’s shepherd.

The catalyst is the *recognition* of *Ge-stell* as the danger that it is – effected explicitly through Heidegger’s thinking; for this implies both the unconcealment of being as such – and thus the overcoming of *Seinsvergessenheit* – and the unconcealment of the essence of man as being’s requisite guardian. It also grounds the recognition of the being-historical essence of *Ge-stell* as a *Geschick* of the revealing of being itself. In so far as it is precisely the recognition of the danger *as* the danger that grounds the possibility of the *Kehre*, Heidegger claims that *Ge-stell* conceals within itself the possibility of its own overturning.

Das Wesen des Gestells ist die Gefahr. Als die Gefahr kehrt sich das Sein in die Vergessenheit seines Wesens von diesem Wesen weg und kehrt sich so zugleich gegen die Wahrheit seines Wesens. In der Gefahr waltet dieses noch nicht bedachte Sich-kehren. Im Wesen der Gefahr *verbirgt* sich darum die Möglichkeit einer Kehre, in der die Vergessenheit des Wesens des Seins sich so wendet, daß mit *dieser* Kehre die Wahrheit des Wesens des Seins in das Seiende eigens einkehrt.⁶

Further, Heidegger writes: ‘Die Gefahr selber ist, wenn sie *als* die Gefahr ist, das Rettende.’⁷ The danger itself is the saviour that initiates the *Kehre* out of *Seinsvergessenheit* into the truth of being. Again: ‘Im Wesen der Gefahr west und wohnt eine Gunst, nämlich die Gunst der Kehre der Vergessenheit des Seins in die Wahrheit des Seins. Im Wesen der Gefahr, wo sie als die Gefahr ist, ist die Kehre zur Wahrnis, ist diese Wahrnis selbst, ist das Rettende des Seins.’⁸ Fundamentally, it is *thinking* that is important here, and above all that

³ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 38

⁴ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 39

⁵ *Was Heißt Denken?*, p. 114

⁶ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 40

⁷ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 41

⁸ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 42

the danger, the truth of being come to *language*.⁹ 'Sprache ist die anfängliche Dimension, innerhalb deren das Menschenwesen überhaupt erst vermag, dem Sein und dessen Anspruch zu entsprechen und im Entsprechen dem Sein zu gehören. *Dieses anfängliche Entsprechen, eigens vollzogen, ist das Denken*.'¹⁰ But what is called thinking? 'Das ekstatische Innestehen im Offenen der Ortschaft des Seins ist als das Verhältnis zum Sein, sei es zum Seienden als solchem, sei es zum Sein selbst, das Wesen des Denkens.'¹¹

In what sense does the *Kehre* amount to our salvation? We saw that the essence of the danger as *Ge-stell* is the preclusion of man from experiencing the truth of being. For mankind to be saved from this danger means simply for him to be propelled into his essence by the bringing forth of the truth of being expressly into unconcealment, into disclosure. The prolusion of this event is the revealing of the danger as the danger that it is.

But what is *most* dangerous about the danger, Heidegger tells us, is that it does *not* – for the most part – reveal itself *as* the danger; that is, that it conceals its own essence. 'Das Gefährlichste der Gefahr besteht...darin, daß die Gefahr sich als die Gefahr, die sie ist, verbirgt.'¹² Indeed, it is all the more concealed the more the various merely technological threats become apparent. How then, one may ask, is it possible at all that, at a particular point in the unfolding of being as history, Heidegger himself brings *Ge-stell* to light as the danger that it is? This amounts to the question of how, by its own lights, Heidegger's philosophy is a historical possibility at all, a question which has been raised by many commentators, including Ute Guzzoni in a recent series of unpublished papers. It is, of course, a question which perhaps every philosophical thesis faces, and all the more so when it expands to the breadth of the edifice of Heidegger's philosophy, although it usually goes unrecognised – for it can only become thematic to a philosophy conscious of its historicity. It is also related, in virtue of the structure of Heidegger's philosophy itself, to an extremely important objection, which we raise below, concerning the structural possibility, again by Heidegger's lights, of the unconcealment of the truth of being *as such*.

Guzzoni argues that Heidegger never sufficiently accounts for the possibility that he can raise the question of being at the historical moment in which *Ge-stell* governs the revealing of all that is. For his thinking of the history of being is apparently ambiguous between, on the one hand, being only preparatory for the *Kehre* and, on the other, telling us

⁹ Heidegger also suggests that art is a domain in which the truth of the essence of modern technology can show itself, and therefore a domain in which the possibility of salvation can be cultivated. Art, for Heidegger, is a way of unconcealment, a way of the revealing of truth. He points out that the Greeks had understood art as a form of *τέχνη* – a bringing forth. He suggests that revealing the essence of technology is the great post-metaphysical, post-aesthetical possibility of art in the epoch of *Ge-stell*. Within the technical world-order, art – in particular poetry – remains capable of a mode of revealing other than that of *Ge-stell*.

¹⁰ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 40

¹¹ *Nietzsche II*, p. 323 Originally italicised.

¹² *Die Gefahr, Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 54

what in fact *is*, namely, *Ge-stell*. If Heidegger's thinking is preparatory then it must also be, it would seem, provisional, for how can Heidegger tell us what *is* before being has disclosed itself in its truth. But this throws the status of the claims that Heidegger makes, indeed his whole philosophy – as the raising of the question of being – as such, into question. On the other hand, if his thinking is not provisional, it is not preparatory of the thinking beyond the *Kehre*. At this point we wish merely to flag this important issue. Only once the conceptuality of the existential analysis is in place may an appropriate response be found.

In the *Beiträge zur Philosophie* Heidegger speaks of the *Kehre* as the “other beginning” [*andere Anfang*]. Here the emphasis is on what he calls the overcoming [*Überwindung*] of metaphysics.¹³

We have seen that the metaphysical epoch in the history of being is characterised fundamentally by *Seinsvergessenheit*. *Seinsvergessenheit* is so called because being as such is forgotten and a precedence of beings establishes itself. That the epoch of metaphysics is overcome means first and foremost that being as such is again raised for questioning, that the truth of being is unconcealed, and thus that *Seinsvergessenheit* is overcome. Heidegger articulates this structure in terms of two basic philosophical questions. The first, the *Leitfrage*, is the fundamental question that defines metaphysical thinking as what it is. This is the question about beings, as regards their beingness (‘was ist das Seiende?, Frage nach der Seiendheit, Sein’¹⁴). It is this question that guides philosophy from its very beginning – from that which Heidegger calls the “first beginning” [*erste Anfang*]. Set apart from this is the *Grundfrage* (‘was ist die Wahrheit des Seyns?’), which, he claims, articulates the other beginning. This is the *Seinsfrage*, the question concerning the truth of being, first broached in *Sein und Zeit*. The first beginning and the other beginning are distinguished as follows: ‘*Der erste Anfang erfährt und setzt die Wahrheit des Seienden, ohne nach der Wahrheit als solcher zu fragen...Der andere Anfang erfährt die Wahrheit des Seyns und fragt nach dem Seyn der Wahrheit, um so erst die Wesung des Seyns zu gründen und das Seiende als das Wahre jener ursprünglichen Wahrheit entspringen zu lassen.*’¹⁵

Heidegger insists that the other beginning cannot be characterised simply in terms of a reaction against metaphysics, a simple opposition to metaphysics. Such a reaction is already to be found in Nietzsche's thought, which, whilst understanding itself to be the overturning of Platonism, remains metaphysical in essence because it is still determined by the basic metaphysical question concerning beings – although Heidegger accords Nietzsche the honour of accomplishing the completion of the possibilities of metaphysical thinking.

¹³ ‘Was heißt Überwindung? Überwinden bedeutet: etwas unter sich bringen und das so unter-sich-Gelassene zugleich hinter sich bringen als dasjenige, was fortan keine bestimmende Macht mehr haben soll.’ [*Nietzsche II*, p. 330]

¹⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 171

¹⁵ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 179

Indeed, any mere reaction to metaphysics, being thereby wholly determined by metaphysics, inevitably fails to move outside of the metaphysical domain of questioning. As another example we could cite logical positivism, which, according to Heidegger, represents the ‘Größte aller “metaphysischen” Denkweisen’¹⁶. Heidegger’s other beginning is considered to be, on the other hand, an absolutely decisive and fundamental historical fracture that leaps beyond all mere reaction into a domain that first and finally brings the essence of metaphysical thinking – the questioning concerning beings and the forgetting of the truth of being – to light in its history; a radical “*Scheidung*”, scission, from the history of the first beginning. ‘Der andere Anfang ist nicht die Gegen richtung zum ersten, sondern steht *als anderes* außerhalb des Gegen und der unmittelbaren Vergleichbarkeit.’¹⁷ However, this precisely involves being-historical “*Besinnung*” – reflection, pondering – on the essence of the history of the first beginning, the history of philosophy itself, which precedes it, for the awakening of the experience of the *need* for the other beginning. Indeed, Heidegger writes: ‘Der Einsprung in den anderen Anfang ist der Rückgang in den ersten und umgekehrt.’¹⁸ This does not at all amount to mere criticism and rejection in the usual – metaphysical – sense, and, importantly, does not simply label metaphysics mistaken. But metaphysical thinking becomes essentially impossible, Heidegger affirms, once the truth of being is raised to, and held in unconcealment.

We have seen that the history of metaphysics reaches its fulfilment in modern nihilism. The overcoming of metaphysics is thus at the same time the overcoming of nihilism. We saw above that the possibility of nihilism lies in the fact that the truth of being refuses itself, that is, is forgotten in *Seinsvergessenheit*. The other beginning, as the raising of the question of being, and thus the overcoming of *Seinsvergessenheit*, is therefore at the same time the overcoming of nihilism.

We saw that the metaphysical concept of value lies paradoxically at the heart of nihilism. This concept is tied essentially to the constellation of categories that configure metaphysical thinking. Unconcealment of the truth of being obviates this constellation of categories and with it the metaphysical concept of value, thereby overcoming the very essence of nihilism. We saw, further, that nihilism is theological in essence, since metaphysics is onto-theology. The theological essence of metaphysics resides in *Seinsvergessenheit*, in the attempt to answer the question of the being of beings with an appeal to a “highest” being. Being itself remains essentially beyond the theological frame of questioning. The overcoming of metaphysics is thus at the same time the overcoming of metaphysical theology. Indeed, Heidegger is prepared to tie the god of theology to the danger

¹⁶ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 172

¹⁷ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 187

¹⁸ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 185

in which the essentially theological epoch of metaphysics culminates: 'Gesetzt aber, Gott sei, zwar nicht das Seyn selbst, aber das Seiendste, wer dürfte jetzt schon wagen, zu sagen, daß dieser so vorgestellte Gott die Gefahr sei für das Seyn?'¹⁹

We saw that the ground of *Seinsvergessenheit* is *Seinsverlassenheit*, the withdrawal of being in its truth, the concealment of unconcealment. Fundamentally, the *Kehre* is to be understood as the turn out of *Seinsverlassenheit*. *Seinsverlassenheit* is the self-refusal of being in its truth, the turning of being away from beings. The *Kehre* is thus the "*Einkehr*" of being back into beings, which is to say the raising of being itself into unconcealment prepared for by the raising of the *Seinsfrage*.

But what does it mean to say that the *Kehre* is the *Einkehr* of being back into beings? In a handful of his later essays, Heidegger develops the concept of what he calls "*das Geviert*". We are unable to offer any more than the bare minimum of exegesis of this concept here. The *Geviert* is the "fourfold", the unitary belonging together of *Erde*, *Himmel*, *Sterblichen* and *Göttlichen*: 'Erde und Himmel, die Göttlichen und die Sterblichen gehören von sich her zueinander einig, aus der Einfalt des einigen Gevierts zusammen.'²⁰ Their mutual quadripartite interrelationship Heidegger calls the "*Spiegel-Spiel*", mirror-play. He writes: 'Wir nennen das ereignende Spiegel-Spiel der Einfalt von Erde und Himmel, Göttlichen und Sterblichen die Welt. Welt west, indem sie weltet.' World is to be conceived in terms of the being of all that presences as such, in terms of the truth of being: 'Die Welt ist die Wahrheit des Wesens von Sein.'²¹ Heidegger relates this concept of world to the concept of a "thing" [*Ding*]. He writes: 'Das Ding dingt'²²; and: 'Das Ding dingt Welt.'²³ The thing things world in so far as it gathers [*versammelt*] the four of the fourfold.

But in the age of modern technology, the gods have fled, the mortals have forgotten their mortality, the skies are polluted, and the earth is exploited. Heidegger writes: 'Im Wesen des Ge-stells ereignet sich die Verwahrlosung des Dinges als Ding. [...] In der Verwahrlosung des Dinges ereignet sich Verweigerung von Welt.'²⁴ The "refusal" of world is the "refusal" of the truth of being: 'Die Wahrheit des Seins dachten wir im Welten von Welt als das Spiegel-Spiel des Gevierts von Himmel und Erde, Sterblichen und Göttlichen.'²⁵ But the *Kehre* means the no longer refusing itself of the truth of being, the overcoming of

¹⁹ Die Gefahr, *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 55

²⁰ Das Ding, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 172

²¹ Die Gefahr, *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 48. Indeed, Heidegger claims that world is being itself, and that, in so far as *Ge-stell* is being itself, world and *Ge-stell* are the same. 'Welt und Ge-Stell sind das Selbe. Sie sind unterschieden das Wesen des Seins. Welt ist die Wahrnis des Wesens des Seins. Ge-Stell ist die vollendete Vergessenheit der Wahrheit des Seins.' [*Die Gefahr, Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 53]

²² Das Ding, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 166

²³ Das Ding, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 173

²⁴ Die Gefahr, *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 47

²⁵ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 43

Seinsvergessenheit. Thus: ‘Wenn die Vergessenheit sich kehrt, wenn Welt als Wahnis des Wesens des Seins einkehrt, ereignet sich der Einblitz von Welt in die Verwahrlosung des Dinges’²⁶; this happens in so far as the four of the fourfold gather together to relate to one another in ways befitting the essence of each. Thus the *Kehre* is fundamentally to be conceived as the turn of the truth of being into beings, by virtue of which things first come to be *as* things; they first “thing” in so far as they first gather together in the unity of the fourfold. World is no longer refused to them. Things are no longer *verwahrlos*, “neglected”, “untended”, as they are under the domination of the mode of revealing of *Ge-stell*; rather, they presence in so far as in them the truth of being comes to unconcealment.

This fundamentally alters man’s comportment towards beings. We saw above that metaphysical thinking understands man to be the *animal rationale*. This conception corresponds to an interpretation of beings in terms of objects. In so far as beings are understood as things in terms of the gathering of the fourfold as the “worlding” of world, man – the *mortal* – is to be understood, as we saw above, as the guardian of the truth of being, of unconcealment as such, as the shepherd of being; ‘Der Mensch ist der Hirt des Seins.’²⁷ But this only in so far as he enters his essence as mortal. Together with the *Kehre* goes a fundamental metamorphosis of the essence of the human.

What are we to make of Heidegger’s sweeping vision of Western history? Are we to accept it as it stands? A final answer will have to wait until after we have considered the grounding of the history of being in the existential analysis of *Dasein*, but we might at this point draw attention to a number of possible worries. The most important of these concern perhaps its totalising tendencies.²⁸ Why is the history of being supposed to have begun in ancient Greece, when, prior to the earliest Greek texts, a literature emerged that has had just as much if not more influence on Western history than the Hellenes? I am mentioning, of course, the Hebraic scriptures. When does the Judeo-Christian step onto being’s historical stage? Indeed, why does Heidegger’s history leap from Greece to Germany with only so much as a cursory glance at the Latinate Medievals? The Graeco-Germanic axis that Heidegger draws as with a ruler through Western history seems to exclude all English literature, all French literature; Spinoza doesn’t get a look in, and even Kierkegaard is quietly dismissed. The only exception is Descartes, who, on the one hand, is saddled with the burden of responsibility for all the ills of modernity, whilst, on the other, whose position as the true torch-bearer of the history of being at the instigation of modern philosophy is supplanted by Leibniz. And what happened to all profound non-philosophical influences on Western history? After all is it not hopelessly naïve to imagine that the historical situation only comes

²⁶ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, pp. 43-44

²⁷ Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, p. 331

to language in the words of “essential thinkers” and not in the words of the economists, the political thinkers, scientists, theologians, artists, etc.?

In Heidegger’s defence it can be pointed out that philosophy really did begin with a particular form of questioning in ancient Greece, and that the Torah and the prophetic scriptures of the Hebrew Bible are theological in orientation, and are therefore, for now familiar reasons, disqualified from its first beginning. But it is not entirely clear why being thereafter favoured the German language for its epiphanies. It is true that German words wear their etymologies on their sleeves, so to speak, in a way in which the Romance languages and English cannot, and so presumably to a greater extent preserve, or are at least very transparent as regards, their inceptual meanings. But that feature alone does not seem sufficient to ground the supposed being-historical pre-eminence of the Germanic as a whole. And this is of course to side-step the autarchism of this Heideggerian motif!

Nevertheless the unilateralism of the history of being need concern us no further, for we are concerned purely with its *structurality*. The history of being is a structural history, the history of a structure, and the geo-ethnics in terms of which it is played out stand beyond the periphery of its central structurality. For our purposes at least it is fundamentally unimportant where the flag of the history of being flies.

Finally, to contribute to an ongoing debate²⁹: How *Hegelian* is Heidegger’s history of being? More precisely: is the history of being merely an inversion of Hegel’s history of spirit? In the first place it must be said in response to this question that the comparison often tends to obscure the very significant differences between the thinkers. For there is a sense in which any *systematic* theory of history can be called “Hegelian” – even those of Foucault and Derrida. I suggest that in only two respects is the comparison enlightening: Firstly, for Heidegger as for Hegel a single principle – radically different in the two cases – unifies all history, constitutes history, makes history history. Secondly, history culminates at the point at which this principle itself is drawn up into its essential truth. Precisely because of this second consideration, the history of being cannot be simply an *inversion* of the history of spirit.

²⁸ This is the fundamental target of Caputo’s book *Demythologizing Heidegger*, as well as, I take it, much of Derrida’s commentary on Heidegger. Cf., for example, his *On Spirit*.

²⁹ Discussed by Heidegger himself in, among other places, the Protocol to the seminar “Zeit und Sein”, *Zur Sache des Denkens*, pp. 51 ff. Cf. also, in no particular order: Robert Bernasconi, *The Question of Language in Heidegger’s History of Being*, Chapter One; Herman Philipse, *Heidegger’s Philosophy of Being*, § 10; Stanley Rosen, *The Question of Being*, Chapter Eight; David Farrell Krell, *Intimations of Mortality*, Chapter Seven.

Part II:

The Existential Analysis

Chapter 6:

Existentiality

In this and the subsequent part we aim to demonstrate that the philosophy of the history of being is made structurally possible by Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*.

To this end we shall, in the next four chapters, trace the central structurality of *Dasein*, leaving certain – at least for our purposes – tangential characteristics to one side. Although we will first be able to understand what Heidegger means by *Dasein* only once this has been completed, we can, before commencing, venture a provisional, working definition of our target concept: *Dasein* is the structurality in virtue of which there can be concealment and unconcealment, in virtue of which truth happens – that means also, in virtue of which there *is* being and in virtue of which, and as which, *Ereignis ereignet*. *Dasein* is the ground of the truth of being: 'Das Wesen des Da-seins und damit der auf es gegründeten Geschichte ist die Bergung der Wahrheit des Seins'¹. And: 'Das Da-sein ist die Gründung der Wahrheit des Seins'². And: 'Da-sein ist das Wort für die Gründung der Wahrheit des Seyns.'³ Thus the analysis of *Dasein* is the analysis of those conditions that make something like unconcealment – which always also implies concealment – that is, the clearing [*Lichtung*] of being, possible at all. But if the history of being is the history of the clearing, of the truth of being, as Heidegger tells us, and if *Dasein* is the possibility, the ground of the clearing itself, then *Dasein* is the ground of the history of being. This it is, as we shall see, as the ground of the belonging of man to the truth of being.

Heidegger writes at the outset of his analysis of *Dasein* in *Sein und Zeit* that: 'Das "Wesen" des Daseins liegt in seiner Existenz.'⁴ The use of "Existenz" here is nomenclatorial, and its meaning will only be fully grasped once the analysis has been carried through. However, it is precisely on the basis of this concept that the concept of *Dasein* is to be

¹ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 308

² *Besinnung*, p. 144

³ *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, p. 149

⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 42

understood. Thus the analysis of *Dasein* is an *existential* analysis, an analysis of the existential structures of *Dasein*. In so far as an existential analysis has to do with the being of a being, the analysis is also *ontological*.⁵ Existence is the name of the being of *Dasein*.

Provisorily, we can state the following concerning the meaning of the word “*Existenz*” as it functions in the existential analysis of *Dasein*: it is used only in application to the being of *Dasein* – only *Dasein* exists. *Dasein* is a being; but no being other than *Dasein* exists. Heidegger’s “existence” is not then to be understood in the traditional sense (which in German can be synonymous with “*Dasein*”). In Heidegger’s vocabulary the “existence” of the tradition is renamed *Vorhandenheit*. It designates, for him, one mode of the being of beings ontologically unlike *Dasein*. The distinction might preliminarily be put like this: Things – beings ontologically unlike *Dasein* – just are; but *Dasein* *has to be*. (“Has” from have: *Dasein* has its being, *owns* its being.) That is, whilst mere things are static, inert and mute, *Dasein* is itself the dynamic (ec-static) determining ground of its own being.⁶ ‘Dieses Seiende ist nicht einfach nur, sondern sofern es ist, geht es ihm um sein eigenes Seinkönnen.’⁷ The existence of *Dasein* is given over to itself, responsible for itself in terms of the way in which it is, and must at every moment define its being with its comportment towards possibilities of its being. Heidegger also expresses this with the thought that *Dasein* is a being with an understanding of being, and therefore is in a constant state of relating to itself as such. *Dasein* can, after all, decide whether “to be or not to be”.

If the existence of *Dasein* is not to be understood in terms of the traditional – which is the same as to say *metaphysical* – understanding of existence (*existentia* in distinction to *essentia*) this further implies that the ways in which *Dasein* exists, the determinations of its existence are not to be taken, in the sense traditional, as *properties* or *attributes* of a thing. For this would be to attribute the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit* to *Dasein*’s existence. Rather, the determinations of the being of *Dasein* are to be understood in terms of existential *possibilities*. One way of expressing the difference between Heidegger’s existential analysis and a traditional ontology – and thus at the same time between being as existence and being as *Vorhandenheit* – would be to say that, whereas for the tradition reality takes precedence over mere possibility, for Heidegger possibility is ontologically “higher” than actuality.

Accordingly, the analysis of existence cannot proceed with the classification of exemplars and species and a tabulation of their essential properties, etc.; rather it is concerned

⁵ In contrast to *ontic*. The horizon of an ontic analysis maintains itself at the level of the particular determination of beings, without asking after their ontological foundations.

⁶ Where do animals enter into this categorisation? Heidegger recognises, most especially in the Winter Semester 1929/1930 lecture course *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik*, that animals are ontologically some way between mere things and *Dasein*, the being of man. Nevertheless, he affirms that they are separated from man by an “abyss of essence”. This grounds an important line of criticism, but one we shall not pursue here.

⁷ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 242

to delineate the *structures* that make the existentiality of *Dasein* possible. It is a structural ontology, and this thought perhaps most clearly encapsulates its contribution to the overcoming of metaphysical thinking. Deliberately echoing Kant's achievement, we can call the initiation of this ostensibly new mode of analysis the "existential turn". The existential turn is the inauguration of the turn out of metaphysics.

The existential analysis begins by analysing the compound concept that Heidegger calls *In-der-Welt-sein* [being-in-the-world]. The existence of *Dasein* is such as to be essentially constituted as being-in-the-world. Heidegger analyses the three structural moments of this compound concept in turn: *World*, *self*, and *being-in*. Only once these three have become clear individually and in their interconnection is the structure of the existence of *Dasein* able to be laid bare.

World

The concept of world re-appears in varying contexts throughout Heidegger's entire *Denkweg*, as we have already borne testimony to. It cannot be denied that at first it seems to fulfil differing functions in these contexts. But this does not at all imply that Heidegger's concept of world in any way fundamentally changed. In the context of the existential analysis of *Dasein*, Heidegger is concerned to bring to light what he calls the *Weltlichkeit* [worldliness] of the world. "Weltlichkeit" ist ein ontologischer Begriff und meint die Struktur eines konstitutiven Momentes des In-der-Welt-seins.⁸ World is therefore a determination of the being of *Dasein*, an "*Existenzial*", as Heidegger puts it. 'Die Welt ist etwas Daseinsmäßiges. Sie ist nicht vorhanden wie die Dinge, sondern sie ist da, wie das Dasein, das wir selbst sind, ist, d. h. existiert. Die Seinsart des Seienden, das wir selbst sind, des Daseins, nennen wir Existenz. Es ergibt sich rein terminologisch: Die Welt ist nicht vorhanden, sondern sie existiert, d. h. sie hat die Seinsart des Daseins.'⁹ World here is, then, not at all to be conceived as the simple enumeration of all that is, for example, whether this be of facts, states of affairs, or things; rather, world is the contoured and gradated substructure of existence within which there can first be facts, states of affairs and things.

The attempt to grasp the worldliness of the world takes, nevertheless, the form of an analysis of the ontological determinations of the beings that *Dasein* encounters within the world. The ontological determination of worldliness can only be laid bare once it has become clear in what sense the beings are that are in the world. Again, this analysis of "inner-worldly" beings does not take the form of an enquiry into the particular or essential *properties* of such beings; rather, the concrete aim of the analysis is to determine the ontological

⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 64

⁹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 237

structure of these beings. This structure is to be determined fundamentally out of the way in which *Dasein* understands the being of inner-worldly beings.

Further, the understanding of the being of inner-worldly beings is to be analysed according to the horizon of what Heidegger calls the *Alltäglichkeit* [everydayness] or *Durchschnittlichkeit* [averageness] of *Dasein*. This determinant initially remains tied to a methodological consideration: in case there are special modes of the existence of *Dasein* into which it seldom enters, these should not function as guides for the interpretation of the ontological constitution of *Dasein*: precisely because of their special nature, they cannot be taken to be representative modes for the proper determination of the being of *Dasein*. What is the ontological structure of the beings that everyday *Dasein* encounters in the world?

Heidegger's basic guiding insight here is that *Dasein* is not *primarily* related to inner-worldly beings in terms of a "*theoretical*" comportment, but rather in terms of a making use, a producing, a taking care of things. The sort of being that is encountered in this making use of inner-worldly beings Heidegger calls a *tool* [*Zeug*¹⁰]. Thus the interpretation of the being of inner-worldly beings in the first place takes the form of an analysis of the way of being of tools.

The most important aspect of the ontological determination of tools concerns the fact that they are *used*. *Use* means employed for the sake of some *end*. *Used* for the sake of some *end*, tools always stand already within a network of *relationships*, a network which incorporates other tools as well as the work that is to be done. 'Jedes Zeug hat den immanenten Bezug auf das, *wozu* es ist, was es ist. Es ist immer etwas *um-zu*, verweisend auf ein *Wozu*. Die spezifische Struktur des Zeugs ist durch einen *Zusammenhang des Um-zu* konstituiert.'¹¹ Heidegger names this relational structure that belongs to the constitution of tools *Verweisung* [best translated perhaps as "reference"; the bearing of indication to something else]. 'Das Weltliche [*Zeug*] begegnet als es selbst immer *in und als Verweisung auf ein anderes*.'¹²

The non-theoretical understanding at work when tools are used typically does not disclose or uncover any tool explicitly or thematically at all. Heidegger writes: 'Als im *Besorgen* Begegnendes wird das Werkzeug nicht auf sein Aussehen untersucht, sondern der genuine Bezug zu ihm ist der gebrauchende Umgang mit ihm; es geht in der *Verweisung* auf. Darin liegt aber etwas Wesentliches: Das *Besorgen* sieht in gewissem Sinne weg vom Werkzeugding, es ist als solches Ding primär gar nicht da, sondern als Werkzeug – "*Zeug-zu*" – *verwendet*.'¹³ What is rather understood in the use of tools is grounded in the *end* for the

¹⁰ "*Zeug*" has a somewhat broader application in German than the English "tool" respectively. Any sort of thing that is used for some purpose is a *Zeug*.

¹¹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 233

¹² *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 252

¹³ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 259

sake of which the tool is employed. The tool itself is subsumed in the relational context which is itself grounded or constituted by this end. Heidegger names the way of being of tools in terms of which they are employed without being explicitly revealed *Zuhandenheit*. *Zuhandenheit* names the basic ontological constitution of inner-worldly beings: '*Zuhandenheit ist die ontologisch-kategoriale Bestimmung von Seiendem, wie es "an sich" ist.*'¹⁴

It is helpful to grasp this thought in terms of the traditional problem of the *principium individuationis*, the principle according to which beings are first individuated one from another. For Heidegger, beings are only individuated, only determined as the beings they are, within a network of relations of usefulness. Beings are ultimately individuated according to their use, where "use" is taken in the widest sense of a sort of basic existential appropriateness. Thus only within existential structurality do beings first receive their determination as beings; there could not *be* beings outside of an existential structurality. This is the essential thought of the existential turn. But beings can only be existentially appropriate, that is, can only be useful, in so far as they have that ontological constitution which Heidegger names *Zuhandenheit*. Of course, the *Zuhandenheit* of inner-worldly beings never comes to light in any non-phenomenological traditional analyses precisely because it determines the being of beings that do *not* explicitly reveal themselves in their being. It is precisely a condition of encountering beings in the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit* that they do not become thematic in their constitution of being at all.¹⁵

¹⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 71

¹⁵ Methodologically, of course, it is incumbent on Heidegger to account for the possibility that *Dasein* have at least some thematic understanding of *Zuhandenheit*. It must be remembered that *Dasein* is a being that has an understanding of being. The being of *Dasein* has been characterised in advance as being-in-the-world. Thus to *Dasein*'s being must belong something like an understanding of world, and therefore of the mode of being of inner-worldly beings. For hermeneutic reasons it is also necessary to give an account of the form that such thematic understanding must take.

Heidegger shows that it is precisely in the breakdown of the relational context in which *Dasein* is otherwise embedded that something like world first becomes thematic. Tools can break, "get in the way", or, perhaps most importantly for Heidegger's concerns, they can be missing, *ab-sent*. They are now no longer *zuhanden* but instead *vorhanden*. They are *vorhanden* in that they have become explicit to *Dasein*'s understanding in so far as they have become conspicuous in causing the inconspicuous relational context to breakdown. In such *Vorhandenheit*, however, precisely the whole relational context itself – the job for which the tool is being used, the work that is to be done, the interrelations to other tools in the workplace, the workplace itself in which it is being used, etc., in short: *Verweisung* itself, ontically considered – becomes thematic, and thereby also *Zuhandenheit* as the being of those beings embedded within it. With *Zuhandenheit*, however, as the basic mode of inner-worldly beings, world itself is also thematised.

That the relational context can become conspicuous here is determined by the possibility that inner-worldly beings can become *vorhanden* to the understanding of *Dasein*. We shall return to this concept repeatedly. There are, however, two important things that we should note here. The first is that it is in terms of the going *wrong* of the relational context in which *zuhanden* inner-worldly beings are embedded that these beings become *vorhanden*. This implies on the one hand that *Vorhandenheit*, as a determination of the being of inner-worldly beings, is *no less* grounded on *Dasein*'s involvement with the world in terms of taking care, making use of beings, as *Zuhandenheit*, and, on the other, that it determines a *deficient* mode of *Dasein*'s intercourse with inner-worldly beings. The second, which

Zuhandenheit, as the constitution of being belonging to tools, is fundamentally determined by *Verweisung*. *Verweisung* is the relational or referential being of tools whereby something like their use or serviceability is first possible. 'Die Verweisung "Dienlichkeit zu" ist...eine ontologisch-kategoriale Bestimmtheit des Zeugs *als* Zeug.'¹⁶ This fundamental character of the being of tools is shown most explicitly in the use of tools of signification. For the serviceability of signs precisely consists in their ability to *explicitly refer Dasein* to other elements of its relational context within which its involvement in the world moves, such that it can thereby orient its involvement for the sake of an end of its being. Making explicit the referential connections of *Verweisung*, signs serve as a pre-eminent example of innerworldly beings ontologically determined as *zuhanden*, bringing the being of tools, *Zuhandenheit*, and thereby *Verweisung*, and indeed worldliness itself, explicitly to light. 'Zeichen ist ein ontisch Zuhandenes, das als dieses bestimmte Zeug zugleich als etwas fungiert, was die ontologische Struktur der Zuhandenheit, Verweisungsganzheit, und Weltlichkeit anzeigt.'¹⁷

Verweisung is not yet the worldliness of the world. It is an ontical determination of the constitution of inner-worldly beings encountered as tools. The being of tools has a relational structure; tools always belong to a relational context and a relational totality. What is still necessary is to determine what the ontological determination of the world must be in order that beings can first become manifest within such a relational context, that is, in order that beings first and foremost reveal themselves as *zuhanden*, for it is on the ground of world that beings are to be primarily encountered as *zuhanden*.

Heidegger names the constitution of being whereby inner-worldly beings are able to be encountered as *zuhanden*, that is, are able to support the determination of *Verweisung*, *Bewandtnis*. 'Bewandtnis ist das Sein des innerweltlichen Seienden, darauf es je schon zunächst freigegeben ist. Mit ihm als Seiendem hat es je eine Bewandtnis.'¹⁸ This word as it is employed by Heidegger cannot be rendered into English. It stems from the verb *bewenden* which in contemporary German is used only idiomatically and always in conjunction with *lassen*. Here it means approximately "to be finished with something", "to let something be as it is", "to let something rest at that". *Bewenden* is a prefixation of *wenden*, the core meaning of which is "to turn", but which also forms the root of the German verb "to use": *verwenden*. *Bewenden* meant originally "to turn towards". *Bewandtnis* itself means a property, state, or condition of something, or a peculiarity, circumstance, or situation of something. What

follows on from this, is that therefore *Dasein's* "theoretical" comportment within the world, in so far as it uncovers beings as *vorhanden*, is itself determined by the structures grounded in *Dasein's* taking care and making use of beings. In this sense, *Vorhandenheit* is to be understood as a derivative mode of *Zuhandenheit*.

¹⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 78

¹⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 82

Heidegger means to be heard in his employment of this word are all of these meanings: the notion of turning towards something, the crucial notion of *letting* something, the notion of the condition or situation of something.

‘In Bewandtnis liegt: Bewenden lassen mit etwas bei etwas.’¹⁹ In so far as beings are able to be encountered at all as *zuhanden*, they must, in the constitution of their being, be such as to be related to other beings, to be “turned towards” other beings. This is an ontological determination of the being of inner-worldly beings. The particular relations that a being has – its *Wofür* and its *Wozu* – are determined by what Heidegger calls a *Bewandtnisganzheit*, which is in turn constituted by what he calls a *Worum-willen*, a possibility of the being of *Dasein*, to whose constitution of being – being-in-the-world – worldliness itself belongs. To this constitution of being belongs also an understanding of being. This understanding of being involves a *concern* of *Dasein* for its being. Out of this concern for its being *possibilities* of its being are determined which ground the *Worum-willen*, itself grounding a *Bewandtnisganzheit*, which in turn determines the encounter with inner-worldly beings. The possibility that inner-worldly beings are encountered as *zuhanden* rests in the constitution of the being of *Dasein* whereby in its being it is concerned about that being. As Heidegger puts it, *Dasein existiert Umwillen seiner*, “*Dasein* exists for the sake of itself”. This is the essence of existence.

However, in order that inner-worldly beings be encountered, they must in the first place, according to Heidegger, be “let be” [*sein lassen*]. This letting-be is not to be understood^{as} an ontical “attitude” that *Dasein* can take towards beings; it is rather to be conceived ontologically. It refers to the fact that beings must be *allowed to be uncovered* in their *Zuhandenheit* (in their possibilities of use and serviceability within a relational context) in order that they can be encountered as inner-worldly beings at all. It is an “a priori” letting-be that is meant here, which is the condition of possibility that *Dasein* can let a being be, or not let it be, in the ontic sense. Heidegger writes: ‘Das auf Bewandtnis hin freigebende Jeshon-haben-bewenden-lassen ist ein apriorisches Perfekt, das die Seinsart des Daseins selbst charakterisiert. Das ontologisch verstandene Bewendenlassen ist vorgängige Freigabe des Seienden auf seine innerumweltliche Zuhandenheit.’²⁰

That on the horizon of which beings are “freed” for their *Zuhandenheit* by this letting-be, in terms of a total relational context in which they have their *Bewandtnis*, is determined by a possibility of *Dasein*’s being. This horizon is what Heidegger means by *world*. World, as the totality of *Bewandtnis* relations within which alone inner-worldly beings can be encountered, is constituted by the *projection* of *Dasein* onto a possibility of its being, a

¹⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 84

¹⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 84

²⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 85

Worum-willen. In so far as *Dasein* is, according to the essence of its existence, always related to a possibility of its being, *Dasein* is always already *in* the world and inner-worldly beings have always already been encountered. The encounter with inner-worldly beings is only possible on the basis of already being in the world. ‘Auf innerweltliches Seiendes können wir einzig deshalb stoßen, weil wir als Existierende je schon in einer Welt sind.’²¹

In so far as *Dasein* is already in a world, *Dasein* already moves within an understanding of the total relational context grounded by the possibilities of its being. Corresponding to this understanding, Heidegger characterises these relations in terms of *Bedeutsamkeit* [“meaning”]. *Bedeutsamkeit* is what Heidegger means by the *worldliness* of the world – the determination of the structure of the being of the world. It is to be understood as the particular mode of presence [*Anwesenheit*] of the world. ‘Bedeutsamkeit ist zunächst Modus der Anwesenheit, auf die alles Seiende der Welt hin entdeckt ist.’²² Accordingly, the referential relations and contexts which we have discussed up until now are finally to be grasped as relations and contexts of meaning. *Bedeutsamkeit* is the necessary condition of the encounter with inner-worldly beings, which also means that every encounter with inner-worldly beings, indeed *Dasein*’s comportment within the world as such, is always one of *understanding*. It is also of course the condition that *Dasein* can understand something like linguistic meanings and therefore of language itself as a basic possibility of *Dasein*.

Being-in

Like worldliness, being-in is an existential; a way of being of *Dasein*. It is not to be understood in terms of the way in which a *vorhanden* thing can be “in” another *vorhanden* thing, for example, a book in a bag, or a chair in a room. Nor does it describe the way in which a subject is among objects. ‘[D]as In-Sein [ist] alles andere als ein nur betrachtendes oder handelndes Gegenüberstehen, das heißt Zusammenvorhandensein eines Subjekts und eines Objekts.’²³ *Da-sein* is itself its *Da*, its “there”. It is this determination of the being of *Dasein* that Heidegger wishes to draw attention to with the designation being-in. Only on the basis of this original “there” can there first be a “here” and an “over there”; that is, that something like spatiality in general can characterise *Dasein*’s being-in-the-world, and thus that *vorhanden* beings can be encountered as *in* other *vorhanden* beings.

The being-in of *Dasein* is the “there”-being of *Dasein* in virtue of which it is always already *in* – at a particular locality – its world. The analysis of being-in takes the form of an analysis of the constitution of the “there”. The “there” is constituted or determined by what

²¹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 235

²² *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 287

²³ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 176

Heidegger calls *Befindlichkeit* and by what he calls *Verstehen* [understanding].²⁴ We shall employ the first of these terms untranslated.

Befindlichkeit is the ontological determination of that which is known ontically as mood [*Stimmung*], as well as of the multifarious phenomena of affection in general. It is the ground of the possibility that *Dasein* can “be in a mood” [*Gestimmtsein*], and, indeed, in so far as it is an existential, it implies that *Dasein* is always “in a mood” of some kind or another, even if perhaps only an entirely indifferent one. *Dasein* is its “there” – which is to say nothing other than that *Dasein* is *in-the-world*. But this “there” has always already been discovered in a certain way; *Dasein* has always already found itself. But *Dasein* is its “there” in *having to be it*; it is *responsible* for its “there”. Mood refers to the way in which the “there” is discovered in the understanding that *Dasein* is responsible for it. ‘In der Gestimmtheit ist immer schon stimmungsmäßig das Dasein als *das Seiende* erschlossen, dem das Dasein in seinem Sein überantwortet wurde als dem Sein, das es existierend zu sein hat.’²⁵ The “there” is determined in so far as *Dasein* is always already confronted by its existence in its responsibility for it. So determined, the “there” is always “mooded”. It will become clearer by the end of the existential analysis why such confrontation should ground the phenomena of mood. At this stage it might merely be added that mood determines the being of *Dasein* in so far as it is *concernfully* related to itself.

In being responsible for its “there” in having to be it, *Dasein* is *delivered over* to its “there”. In being delivered over to its “there” *Dasein* encounters the mere fact *that it is*. This “*that-it-is*” Heidegger names *Dasein’s Geworfenheit* [“thrownness”]. *Dasein* is thrown into its “there” in such a way as to be responsible for it, without ever having first chosen to be responsible for it. ‘Der Ausdruck Geworfenheit soll die *Faktizität der Überantwortung* andeuten.’²⁶ In so far as *Dasein* is existentially determined by responsibility for its that-it-is, the that-it-is peculiar to *Dasein* is not at all analogous to the unresponsive that-it-is of something *vorhanden*. *Geworfenheit*, as a determination of its being, indicates that *Dasein* has always already found itself in so far as it is delivered over to its “there” in such a way as to be responsible for it, and this ontological finding of *Dasein* of itself is referred to by Heidegger as *Dasein’s Befindlichkeit*.

Befindlichkeit has a *disclosive* function; it discloses to *Dasein* its being in its *Geworfenheit*. Being-in, and therefore being-in-the-world as such as the being of *Dasein*, is disclosed in *Befindlichkeit*. We saw above that *Dasein’s* encounter with inner-worldly beings is always *concernful* in so far as it is always grounded in a *Bewandtnisganzheit* constituted by a possibility of *Dasein’s* being. It is never in the first place a mere

²⁴ Along with language, which we shall leave out of our exposition.

²⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 134

²⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 135

disinterested staring at something. This concerned encounter is only possible in so far as inner-worldly beings are constituted in such a way as to be capable of *affecting Dasein* in some way or another. Inner-worldly beings are able to affect *Dasein* only in so far as they *matter* to *Dasein* in regards to its concern for its own being. This mattering is grounded in *Befindlichkeit* – in *Dasein's* being delivered over to its being in having to be it. In so far as inner-worldly beings as *zuhanden* are always such as to be of concern to *Dasein*, *Befindlichkeit* determines the disclosure of world as such. 'In der Befindlichkeit liegt existenzial eine erschließende Angewiesenheit auf Welt, aus der her Angehendes begegnen kann.'²⁷

Befindlichkeit grounds the affectation of *Dasein* in general, and therefore the various emotional phenomena that determine being-in-the-world. Paradigmatically perhaps, *Befindlichkeit* grounds the possibility that *Dasein* can find something in the world *threatening*, and therefore the various manifestations of fear. In these phenomena the existential concern *Dasein* has for its own being is brought clearly to light. Heidegger also claims that *Befindlichkeit* is the ground of the possibility that *Dasein* can be affected in a *sensory* way. Perhaps here the phenomena of beauty and the possibility of ~~corporeal~~ pain are paradigmatic examples of what Heidegger has in mind.

As well as by *Befindlichkeit*, the "there" is existentially structured by what Heidegger calls *Verstehen* [understanding].²⁸ *Befindlichkeit* always has its understanding; understanding is always determined by *Befindlichkeit*. What Heidegger means by understanding here, it should be emphasised again, is removed from the epistemology of a mere cognitive grasping of something. Heidegger conceives it as an existential. *Dasein* can only enter into some epistemological understanding of something because *Dasein's* being is already essentially determined by understanding as such. 'Das Verstehen ist keine Art des Erkennens, sondern die Grundbestimmung des Existierens.'²⁹

The conception of understanding that Heidegger has in mind already played a role in the discussion of *Bewandtnis* and *Bedeutsamkeit*, the worldliness of the world. The existence of *Dasein* is always for the sake of itself. World is disclosed structured according to the relations of *Bedeutsamkeit* that are constituted by the possibility for the sake of which *Dasein* at any time exists. Disclosed according to *Bedeutsamkeit*, world is always already *understood*. Understanding, as an existential characterising the being of *Dasein*, is ontically determined or structured according to that for the sake of which *Dasein* at any specific time exists.

²⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 137-138. Originally italicised.

²⁸ One *decisive* difference between the existential analysis of *Dasein* and the later philosophy of the history of being, is the omission in the latter of this concept of understanding. Why this is so and what this amounts to should become clearer in the following part.

²⁹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 393

Das Dasein ist existierend sein Da, besagt einmal: Welt ist "da"; deren *Da-sein* ist das In-Sein. Und dieses ist imgleichen "da" und zwar als das, worumwillen das Dasein ist. Im Worumwillen ist das existierende In-der-Welt-sein als solches erschlossen, welche Erschlossenheit Verstehen genannt wurde. Im Verstehen des Worumwillen ist die darin gründende Bedeutsamkeit miterschlossen. Die Erschlossenheit des Verstehens betrifft als die von Worumwillen und Bedeutsamkeit gleichursprünglich das volle In-der-Welt-sein. Bedeutsamkeit ist das, woraufhin Welt als solche erschlossen ist. Worumwillen *und* Bedeutsamkeit sind im Dasein erschlossen besagt: Dasein ist Seiendes, dem es als In-der-Welt-sein um es selbst geht.³⁰

Dasein exists in the world for the sake of itself, in such a way that it is given over to itself, delivered over to its "there". Existence is given over to *Dasein* itself such that *Dasein* is responsible for it in its capacity to be. In so far as *Dasein*, always existing for the sake of itself, is given over to itself in its capacity to be, *Dasein's* being is structured according to possibility [*Möglichkeit*].³¹ The existence of *Dasein* is itself, as Heidegger puts it, *Möglichsein*. 'Dasein ist je das, was es sein kann und wie es seine Möglichkeit ist.'³² Indeed Heidegger writes: 'Die Möglichkeit als Existenzial...ist die ursprünglichste und letzte positive ontologische Bestimmtheit des Daseins'.³³

Possibility here concerns the way in which *Dasein* is in the world for the sake of itself. In virtue of possibility, inner-worldly beings are first revealed in their usefulness and serviceability for the sake of *Dasein's* being. 'Die Bewandtnisganzheit enthüllt sich als das kategoriale Ganze einer *Möglichkeit* des Zusammenhangs von Zuhandenem.'³⁴ Possibility in this sense is not at all something arbitrary. In virtue of its *Geworfenheit* and *Befindlichkeit*, *Dasein* has always already found itself within a determinate sphere of possibilities. *Dasein* is "geworfene *Möglichkeit*".

Understanding in the existential sense is to be understood as that determinant of *Dasein's* being whereby, in its capacity to be, it is always already related to possibilities of its self, of its being, for the sake of which it is, such that world is disclosed in its corresponding structures.³⁵ 'Das eigenste Seinkönnen selbst sein, es übernehmen und sich in der *Möglichkeit* halten, sich selbst in der faktischen Freiheit seiner selbst verstehen, d. h. *das sich*

³⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 143

³¹ Heidegger is keen to distinguish possibility in the existential sense from mere logical possibility in the sense of something not real and no necessity.

³² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 143

³³ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 143-144

³⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 144

³⁵ Heidegger points out that "theoretical" understanding is also structured by the category of possibility. In order to theoretically understand something it suffices to grasp the *conditions of its possibility*. The question "why such and such?" always finds its answer once the conditions of the possibility of such and such have been given.

*selbst Verstehen im Sein des eigensten Seinkönnens, ist der ursprüngliche existenziale Begriff des Verstehens.*³⁶

Heidegger's existential concept of possibility necessarily implies a further concept: *project*, or *projection* [Entwurf]. *Projection is the existential structure of Dasein's understanding*, in virtue of which *Dasein* projects itself onto a possibility for the sake of itself, and therefore onto its world. 'Verstehen besagt genauer: *sich entwerfen auf eine Möglichkeit, im Entwurf sich je in einer Möglichkeit halten.*'³⁷ And: 'Der Entwurfcharakter des Verstehens konstituiert das In-der-Welt-sein hinsichtlich der Erschlossenheit seines Da als Da eines Seinkönnens.'³⁸

Projection here is an existential and should not be conflated with something like the mere making of plans according to which *Dasein* can subsequently comport itself. Plans are merely ontical; on the other hand, in so far as it is, *Dasein* has always already projected itself. 'Dasein hat...sich je schon entworfen und ist, solange es ist, entwerfend. Dasein versteht sich immer schon und immer noch, solange es ist, aus Möglichkeiten.'³⁹ As an ontological determination of *Dasein*, the structure of projection is rather the condition that *Dasein* can make plans at all. Further, in so far as possibilities are levelled down to the onticity of mere plans they lose their character as possibilities, for they then become understood according to a conception of being as *Vorhandensein* – they become simply given existences of the future. For: 'Der Möglichkeitscharakter wird nur im Entwurf offenbar und ist nur offenbar, solange die Möglichkeit im Entwurf festgehalten ist.'⁴⁰

Understanding as projection always concerns the whole of being-in-the-world in so far as being-in and world are themselves structured according to the possibilities in terms of which *Dasein* understands itself. Thus *Dasein's* projection onto any given possibility always involves an existential modification of the whole of being-in-the-world. Understanding is always self-understanding: 'Das Wesentlich des Verstehens als Entwurf liegt darin, daß in ihm das Dasein sich selbst existenziell versteht.'⁴¹ But self-understanding is always in terms of existential possibility, and, reciprocally, is thus always already understanding of world: 'Im Sichverstehen als In-der-Welt-seinkönnen ist gleichursprünglich Welt verstanden.'⁴²

As Heidegger makes clear in his introduction to the book, the existential analysis of *Sein und Zeit* is intended to reach a horizon of understanding from which the meaning of being can be asked after. Heidegger's development of an existential conception of understanding is central to this task. That *Dasein* has an understanding of being is one of the

³⁶ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 391

³⁷ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 392

³⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 145

³⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 145

⁴⁰ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 392

⁴¹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 393

presuppositions that gets the existential analysis of *Dasein* going in the first place. Only once the structures of this understanding in general are worked out phenomenologically can it first become understandable in what *Dasein's* understanding of being must necessarily consist, and only upon that basis is the horizon reached for enquiring into the meaning of being according to this understanding. In so far as Heidegger has now shown that something like an understanding of being-in-the-world belongs necessarily to the existential constitution of *Dasein's* being and being itself is included in being-in-the-world as the being or existence of *Dasein*⁴³, Heidegger has now established his incipient presupposition – that *Dasein* has – indeed, essentially – an understanding of being. Of course, this understanding is unthematic. In so far as *Dasein's* understanding concerns for the most part *existentiell* possibilities of itself, it is for the most part a merely *ontic* understanding. The genuine possibility of ontological understanding and the relation of this understanding of being to the meaning of being in general will become clearer below.

The existential constitution of being-in has been characterised in terms of *Befindlichkeit* and understanding. It must be remembered that these two existentials *jointly* and *reciprocally* characterise the disclosure of being-in-the-world: 'In der Weise der Gestimmtheit "sieht" das Dasein Möglichkeiten, aus denen her es ist. Im entwerfenden Erschließen solcher Möglichkeiten ist es je schon gestimmt.'⁴⁴

Selfhood

Despite the fact that *Selbstheit* [selfhood] is an essential concept for the existential analysis of *Dasein*, it plays, in *Sein und Zeit*, little explanatory role, and Heidegger's brief discussions of it are for the most part restricted to negative characterisation. What we shall say about it here will presuppose some of the discussion to come, in particular, the existential concepts of *Sorge*, authenticity and inauthenticity.

As to his negative characterisation, Heidegger distinguishes the existential concept of the self of *Dasein* from the traditional concepts of the "I" of the "I think", of the subject whether as *ὑποκείμενον*, substance or the logical subject, and consciousness. All of these conceptions, he claims, based on the metaphysical understanding of the being of beings, take the self to be something *vorhanden*. For example: '...der ontologische Begriff des Subjekts charakterisiert *nicht die Selbstheit des Ich qua Selbst, sondern die Selbigkeit und*

⁴² *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 394

⁴³ 'In der Entworfenheit seines Seins auf das Worumwillen in eins mit der auf die Bedeutsamkeit (Welt) liegt Erschlossenheit von Sein überhaupt. Im Entwerfen auf Möglichkeiten ist schon Seinsverständnis vorweggenommen. Sein ist im Entwurf verstanden, nicht ontologisch begriffen. Seiendes von der Seinsart des wesenhaften Entwurfs des In-der-Welt-seins hat als Konstitutivum seines Seins das Seinsverständnis.' [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 147]

⁴⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 148

*Beständigkeit eines immer schon Vorhandenen.*⁴⁵ In contrast, in so far as selfhood belongs essentially to *Dasein*, and *Dasein* is existential, the self can *only* adequately be thematised on the model of existence. All of the above conceptions must be merely ontic and ultimately derivative characterisations. *Dasein* is not a “what”, but a “who”; and “who” is an existential determination.

The selfhood of *Dasein* is constituted by the fact that it is *related to its self*. *Selfhood is self-relation*. This notion of self-relation does not yet, of course, distinguish Heidegger’s concept of selfhood from the traditional accounts from Kant, for example, or from Locke.⁴⁶ Rather, the distinction of Heidegger’s account lies in the *existential* thematisation of this self-relation. *Dasein* is related to itself in so far as it is existential, since existentiality is *grounded* in the fact that *Dasein* is always *concerned* about its being, that is, concerned about its *self*, that is, *exists* always in relation to its self. When Heidegger writes that “*Das Dasein existiert umwillen seiner*” he means that *Dasein* exists for the sake of its *self*. This has two original consequences. On the one hand, it is this “*umwillen seiner*”, as we have seen, that determines the whole existentiality of being-in-the-world. For it is *Dasein*’s projection of itself onto a possibility of its being for the sake of itself that determines the *Bewandtnisganzheit* and therefore the structure of *Bedeutsamkeit* that constitutes the worldliness of the world in which *Dasein* finds and understands itself as *geworfen* amidst its possibilities. Determinative of existentiality as such, selfhood is therefore the ground of the possibility of the disclosure of world and of inner-worldly beings, which is to say, as we shall see below, *that it is itself the ground of the possibility of disclosure, unconcealment, of truth as such*. Only in so far as *Dasein* is a self can it comport itself to beings at all. ‘Sofern... das Dasein als Selbst existiert – und nur insofern – kann es “sich” verhalten zu Seiendem’⁴⁷.

On the other hand, it grounds the fact that, existing for the sake of its self, *Dasein* can *either* be its self, that is, be truly who it authentically is, *or also not* be its self, that is, *abandon or lose* its self. These two possibilities correspond to twin concepts that together configure – as we shall attempt to show – the epicentral substructure of Heidegger’s philosophical architectonic: authenticity and inauthenticity. These are fundamental modes of *Dasein*’s existential constitution of being. Their shared etymological root, *eigen*, means “to own”. The existentiality of *Dasein*, as concern for itself, is, we are told, essentially determined by what Heidegger calls *Jemeinigkeit* – *Dasein* is in each case *my own*. Authenticity is that mode of being in which *Dasein* owns itself by being its self; inauthenticity is that mode of being in which *Dasein* has lost itself by abandoning its self. Inauthentic

⁴⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 320

⁴⁶ Cf. Locke: ‘Self is that conscious thinking thing,...which is sensible, or conscious of Pleasure and Pain, capable of Happiness or Misery, and so is concern’d for it *self*, as far as that consciousness extends.’ [*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Chapter XXVII, §17]

⁴⁷ Vom Wesen des Grundes, *Wegmarken*, p. 138

Dasein has rather the self of what Heidegger calls *das Man*, an entirely neutralised self that is not really *owned* by anyone. Nevertheless, this is the self of *Dasein* initially and for the most part, the self of *Dasein*'s everydayness. Thus Heidegger writes: 'Die "natürliche" Ich-Rede vollzieht das Man-selbst. Im "Ich" spricht sich das Selbst aus, das ich zunächst und zumeist *nicht* eigentlich bin.'⁴⁸ Instead 'Die Selbstheit ist existenzial nur abzulesen am eigentlichen Selbstseinkönnen, das heißt an der Eigentlichkeit des Seins des Daseins *als Sorge*.'⁴⁹

This remains a preliminary account of the all-important distinction between authenticity and inauthenticity. In subsequent chapters we shall attempt to unfold the structurality constituted by these concepts and the way in which it is determinative for Heidegger's philosophy as a whole.

Before continuing, however, and in anticipation of much of the discussion to come, it is pertinent to insert a consideration of the way in which selfhood functions on the horizon of the history of being. For the concept of selfhood indicates to a certain extent the way in which the relation of the existential analysis to the philosophy of the history of being is to be conceived.

In *Beiträge zur Philosophie* it is emphasised on the one hand that: 'Selbstheit entspringt als Wesung des Da-seins aus dem Ursprung des Da-seins'⁵⁰, and, on the other, that it is: 'der Grund für die Zugehörigkeit [des Menschen] zum Seyn.'⁵¹ As we saw above, being *needs* historical man for the safe guarding of its truth. Heidegger thus continues: 'Die Zugehörigkeit zum Seyn aber west nur, weil das Sein in seiner Einzigkeit das Da-sein braucht und darin gegründet und es gründend den Menschen. Anders west keine Wahrheit.' In what sense is selfhood, grounded in the essence of *Dasein*, the ground of man's "*Zugehörigkeit zum Seyn*"?

Heidegger writes that: 'der Ursprung des Selbst ist das *Eigen-tum*'⁵² as the 'Herrschaft der Eignung im Ereignis.' Thus selfhood as "*Eigen-tum*" is explicitly related to *Ereignis*⁵³. The self-relational character of the existentiality of *Dasein* grounded in *Sorge* is the ground of *Dasein*'s "owning" itself, the ground of the being of *Dasein* being given over to itself. This "owning-itself", is the ground of *Dasein*'s belonging to *Ereignis*, which is to say *the ground of the belonging of Dasein to the truth of being*. In so far as the relation of historical man to being is first grounded in the structures of *Dasein*, however, it is also *the ground of the belonging of historical man to the truth of being*.

⁴⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 322

⁴⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 322

⁵⁰ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 319

⁵¹ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 317

⁵² *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, pp. 319-320

⁵³ The etymological relation between the verb *eigen* [to own] from which Heidegger derives *Eigen-tum*, and *Er-eygnis* is clear. Although cf. our discussion of this in chapter 9.

Heidegger continues: 'Sofern das Da-sein sich zu-geeignet wird als zugehörig zum Ereignis, kommt es zu sich *selbst*'⁵⁴. We saw above that *Dasein* is its *self* only in so far as it is in the existential mode of authenticity. Inauthentic *Dasein* is precisely *not* its *self*. That *Eigen-tum*, as the origin of selfhood, is grounded in *Ereignis* means that historical man, whose essence it is to belong to the truth of being, only comes to its self in so far as it "takes up" or "takes over" its belonging to the truth of being. Heidegger writes: 'Die Inständigkeit in [dem] Geschehnis des Eigentums ermöglicht erst dem Menschen, geschichtlich zu "sich" zu kommen und bei-sich zu sein...Aber das Zu-sich-kommen ist eben nie eine zuvor abgelöste Ich-vorstellung, sondern Übernahme der Zugehörigkeit in die Wahrheit des Seins, Einsprung in das Da. Das Eigentum als Grund der Selbstheit gründet das Da-sein. Eigentum aber ist selbst wieder das Beständnis der Kehre im Ereignis.'⁵⁵ The coming to its *self* of historical man as the explicit "taking up" of its belonging to the truth of being, which is to say the explicit bringing of the truth of being itself to unconcealment, is what we have previously discussed under the name *die Kehre*; that is, it is the fundamental turning in the history of being *out* of the nihilistic epoch of metaphysics that is grounded in *Seinsvergessenheit*, and *into* the truth of being. This is possible only on the basis of the mode of being of *Dasein* of authenticity as a fundamental possibility of its ontological constitution. For, in coming to its self, *Dasein* encounters the truth of (its) being as such. 'Das Dasein ist es selbst aus seinem wesenhaften Bezug zum Sein überhaupt.'⁵⁶

Sorge

Worldliness, being-in, and selfhood are the constitutive moments of the existential structure that Heidegger calls being-in-the-world – the existential constitution of *Dasein*. Being-in-the-world is, however, to be grasped as a *unitary* phenomenon; it is not to be understood as the result of a progressive connecting together of its constitutive moments. Once he has presented a phenomenological thematisation of each of its constitutive moments, Heidegger puts himself to the task of thematising the unity of being-in-the-world as such, upon which each of its constitutive moments is ontologically grounded. This amounts to the attempt to grasp the ground of the entirety of the phenomenon.

⁵⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 320

⁵⁵ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 320

⁵⁶ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 22. These considerations refute the central thesis of Michael Zimmerman's book *Eclipse of the Self*. Zimmerman argues, as the title of the work suggests, that the self becomes less important to Heidegger's philosophical concerns after *Sein und Zeit*. This is, according to him, because of perceived short-comings involving the notion of authenticity, which in *Sein und Zeit* remained too "voluntaristic" to overcome the philosophy of the subject. Clearly, though, given its important place in *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, there was no eclipse of the self, and this is no doubt because the way in which the self was conceived, from the very beginning, was as an existential self-relation, and thus nothing to do with the *Vorhandenheit* of the philosophy of the subject.

Heidegger names this ontological ground of existentiality *Sorge* [care]. Fundamentally – and this cannot be over emphasised – *Sorge* is to be understood in terms of the belonging together of *existentiality* and *facticity*. He writes: ‘Das Dasein existiert faktisch. Gefragt wird nach der ontologischen Einheit von Existentialität und Faktizität, bzw. der wesenhaften Zugehörigkeit dieser zu jener.’⁵⁷

However, before Heidegger can outline the phenomenal content of *Sorge* as the unitary constitution of being-in-the-world, it is methodologically incumbent on him to secure an appropriate mode of access to the phenomenon. One might presume that Heidegger should have done this right at the start of his analyses, but before the existential structure of disclosure as such was laid bare, that is, before the existentials of understanding and *Befindlichkeit* were outlined, the requisite ground for securing the appropriate mode of phenomenological access was unavailable. The analysis of *Sorge* begins the second revolution of the hermeneutic wheel. From now on Heidegger is explicitly moving within the existential structures of disclosure that he has outlined. In what follows we shall not pursue any further the methodological issues raised by Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology.

The unitary ground of the totality of being-in-the-world is the ontological ground of the existentiality of *Dasein*. As we saw above, understanding always has its *Befindlichkeit*, and understanding and *Befindlichkeit* taken together determine what Heidegger calls the *Erschlossenheit* [disclosedness] of the “there”. Heidegger asks therefore: ‘Gibt es eine verstehende Befindlichkeit im Dasein, in der es ihm selbst in ausgezeichneter Weise erschlossen ist?’⁵⁸ According to Heidegger such a *Befindlichkeit* is understood under the name *Angst*. ‘Die Angst gibt als Seinsmöglichkeit des Daseins in eins mit dem in ihr erschlossenen Dasein selbst den phänomenalen Boden für die explizite Fassung der ursprünglichen Seinsganzheit des Daseins.’⁵⁹ We shall follow Heidegger’s methodologically requisite phenomenological analysis of this mode of *Befindlichkeit* in order to be in a position to fully grasp the sense of Heidegger’s claim that the fundamental ontological determination of *Dasein* is to be understood as *Sorge* and other important analyses still to come.

The first important consideration is that the phenomenon of *Angst* is essentially connected to the existential modes of authenticity and inauthenticity, which shall be discussed in more detail below. More specifically, the phenomenon of *Angst* is determined as the ground of what Heidegger calls *Verfallen*. ‘Die Abkehr des Verfallens gründet...in der Angst’⁶⁰. For the purposes of the following discussion, and in anticipation of a more thorough treatment, we shall define the phenomenon of *Verfallen* to be the flight [*Flucht*] of

⁵⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 181

⁵⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 182

⁵⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 182

⁶⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 186

Dasein from its authentic self to the self of *das Man*, to the mode of being of inauthenticity.⁶¹ This amounts to a *flight towards inner-worldly beings*; that is, beings of a type which *Dasein* is not.

The flight of *Verfallen* is the flight of *Dasein* from its self. In order for this flight to be possible, *Dasein's* being must in a certain non-conceptual sense always already be disclosed to *Dasein*. This disclosure is the accomplishment of the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, and it is on the basis of this pre-conceptual disclosure of the being of *Dasein* to itself in the flight of *Dasein* from its self that Heidegger aims to conceptualise the being of *Dasein* in its totality and unity. 'Die existenziell-ontische Abkehr gibt auf Grund ihres Erschlossenheitscharakters phänomenal die Möglichkeit, existenzial-ontologisch das Wovor der Flucht als solches zu fassen.'⁶²

The second important consideration is expressed in Heidegger's insistence that *Angst* is not to be confused with fear. Whereas fear is always fear before this or that inner-worldly being, that which *Angst* is *Angst* before is nothing determinate at all. In his inaugural address Heidegger characterises that which *Angst* is *Angst* before as precisely *nothing*. 'Die Angst offenbart das Nichts.'⁶³ But not being determinate, *Angst* cannot ground a *Bewandtnisganzheit* of any kind. What *Angst* is *Angst* before is therefore not "relevant" in any sense, claims Heidegger. Indeed, it is precisely in the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* that the significance-structures of the worldliness of the world within which *Dasein* is "being-in" evanesce: 'Die innerweltlich entdeckte Bewandtnisganzheit des Zuhandenen und Vorhandenen ist als solche überhaupt ohne Belang...Die Welt hat den Charakter völliger Unbedeutsamkeit.'⁶⁴ And: 'Alle Dinge und wir selbst versinken in eine Gleichgültigkeit.'⁶⁵ This is because: '*das Wovor der Angst ist die Welt als solche. Die völlige Unbedeutsamkeit... bedeutet nicht Weltabwesenheit, sondern besagt, daß das innerweltlich Seiende an ihm selbst so völlig belanglos ist, daß auf dem Grunde dieser Unbedeutsamkeit des Innerweltlichen die Welt in ihrer Weltlichkeit sich einzig noch aufdrängt.*'⁶⁶ The irrelevance of the world in *Angst* will become important to our concerns in subsequent chapters.

In so far as *Angst* is *Angst* before the world as such, it is more precisely *Angst* before the being-in-the-world of *Dasein*; that is, before the being of *Dasein itself*. On the other hand, that for the sake of which *Dasein* has *Angst* is not any particular possibility of its being; rather, *Dasein* has *Angst* for the sake of its being as such, that is, for the sake of being-in-the-

⁶¹ As we shall see, however, *Verfallen* is in the last place to be conceived as determinative of the basic structure of truth as unconcealment.

⁶² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 185

⁶³ Was ist Metaphysik?, *Wegmarken*, p. 112

⁶⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 186

⁶⁵ Was ist Metaphysik?, *Wegmarken*, p. 111

world as such. Being-in-the-world is thus both that for the sake of which *Dasein* has *Angst* and that before which *Dasein* has *Angst*. The basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* is therefore disclosive, albeit non-conceptually or non-thematically, of the being of *Dasein*.⁶⁷

In so far as *Angst* is wholly indeterminate, it has to do with the *whole* of the being of *Dasein*, the being of *Dasein* as such, and it is for this reason that it is, for Heidegger, methodologically significant. Brought before itself as such, *Dasein* is “*vereinzelt*”, individuated. *Angst* therefore brings *Dasein* before its possibility for authenticity. It is for this reason that the flight of *Verfallen*, grounded in *Angst*, is to be characterised as the flight away from the possibility of authenticity – away from *Dasein* in so far as it is its self – towards inner-worldly beings.

The fundamental *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* grounds the fundamental determination of the being of *Dasein* as such as *Sorge*. In what sense does the fundamental *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* accomplish this? What does Heidegger mean by *Sorge*?

Angst grounds the fundamental determination of the being of *Dasein* as *Sorge* in two ways. On the one hand, *Angst* as a fundamental *Befindlichkeit* is only a possibility for the being of a being whose being is to be characterised as *Sorge*; on the other hand, the being of *Dasein* that is disclosed in *Angst* is fundamentally determined as *Sorge*.

We saw that that before which and that for the sake of which *Dasein* has *Angst* are the same: being-in-the-world. Nevertheless, we saw that that before which *Dasein* has *Angst* is the world as such bereft of the meaning structures that otherwise determine it, that is, the world in the simple fact that it is; and we also saw that that for the sake of which *Dasein* has *Angst* is its being but not in regard to any particular possibility of its being; rather: in regard to its possibility-of-being as such; that is, in regard to its basic character of existing for the sake of itself, its “being-possible” as such. Therefore Heidegger determines the basic character of *Angst* as follows: ‘Das sichhängen ist als Befindlichkeit eine Weise des In-der-Welt-seins; das Wovor der Angst ist das geworfene In-der-welt-sein; das Worum der Angst ist das In-der-

⁶⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 187

⁶⁷ It might be wondered whether the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* is really distinguished by its capacity to disclose the being of *Dasein* as such. Perhaps depression might be thought to reveal the “unbearable lightness of being” as such; and Heidegger himself recognises that boredom – a special mode of the disclosure of time – can perform the same function. (Cf. especially *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik*.) Indeed, Haar notes that whilst *Angst* is the revelation of being, boredom is the correlative revelation of time. [Empty Time and Indifference to Being in *Heidegger Toward the Turn*, ed. Risser, p. 306] Why then is the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* of such importance to Heidegger’s purposes? The answer lies in the fact that *Angst* concerns the disclosure of existence as *possibility* (rather than as meaningless or tedious, etc.), and of course it is precisely existence as possibility that Heidegger wishes to outline in the existential analytic. Indeed, *Angst* could be characterised as the fear of possibility as such, and that would be why it is always indeterminate. In so far as it is the fear of possibility, *Angst* bears a distinguished relation to the mode of *Dasein*’s being of authenticity – as that mode of being defined by the choice of *Dasein*’s own-most possibility –, and thus to the corresponding determination of *Verfallen*. And it is as the ground of *Verfallen* that *Angst* is indispensable to the elaboration of the *Sorge* structure.

Welt-sein-können. Das volle Phänomen der Angst demnach zeigt das Dasein als faktisch existierendes In-der-Welt-sein. Die fundamentalen ontologischen Charaktere dieses Seienden sind Existenzialität, Faktizität und Verfallensein.⁶⁸ These three fundamental ontological characteristics of *Dasein* taken together constitute the ontological structure that Heidegger names *Sorge*.

Existentiality concerns the character of the being of *Dasein* whereby, in so far as in its being it is always concerned about its being, and therefore exists always for the sake of itself, it is always already related to a possibility of its being. That *Dasein* is always already related to a possibility of being is to say that *Dasein* is always already “*vorweg*”, as Heidegger puts it, already beyond itself. *Dasein* is *vorweg* in relation to a possibility of its being; *Dasein* is, Heidegger writes, “*Sich-vorweg-sein*”.

Facticity refers to the character of the being of *Dasein* whereby it is always already *geworfen* into a world, and is thereby given over to responsibility for itself in its capacity to be. This always already fundamentally determines existentiality, which can therefore be more fully grasped as “*Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in-einer-Welt*”. This is to say that existence is always factual, or that existentiality is essentially determined by facticity.

Verfallensein refers to a ontological determination which we have yet to adequately thematise – that *Dasein*, in its factual existentiality, has always already become “absorbed”⁶⁹ in a world among inner-worldly beings. *Verfallensein* is the flight of *Dasein* towards inner-worldly beings and away from its fundamental existential possibility of authenticity, and is thus to be understood dynamically; Heidegger characterises it as an *Absturz*, a “plunge” into inner-worldly beings. In so far as it is always already absorbed amidst inner-worldly beings, *Dasein*, as *Verfallensein*, is always already “*Sein-bei*”. But to “*Sein-bei*” necessarily belongs that *Dasein* is already in a world engaged with a possibility of its being, and thus existentiality and facticity.

The three fundamental ontological characteristics comprising the being of *Dasein* are to be taken together in their structural unity: ‘Das Sein des Daseins besagt: *Sich-vorweg-schon-sein-in-(der-Welt-)* als *Sein-bei* (innerweltlich belegendem Seienden). Dieses Sein erfüllt die Bedeutung des Titels *Sorge*, der rein ontologisch-existenzial gebraucht wird.’⁷⁰

Sorge is the basic existential constitution of the being of *Dasein*, the unity of the moments of being-in-the-world – world, being-in and selfhood.⁷¹ It cannot be derived from

⁶⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 191

⁶⁹ Perhaps also: “entangled”, “enmeshed”.

⁷⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 192

⁷¹ In what sense is *Sorge* different from the metaphysical category of the will? And, correspondingly, in what sense is Heidegger’s account of human existence fundamentally different from that of Schopenhauer or Nietzsche? The existential analysis belongs to the overcoming of metaphysics, as we have already suggested, and therefore to the overcoming of the philosophy of the subject. The category of the will belongs essentially to the philosophy of the subject. Thus the will is in fact, Heidegger

any more primordial existential element of the being of *Dasein*. Nevertheless, in so far as it is itself *structured* in its unity, it remains to grasp the possibility of this structuring; that is, it remains to grasp the more primordial phenomenon which first makes the wholeness and the unity of the *Sorge* structure possible. This is to be determined as primordial temporality.

would say, the metaphysical interpretation (according to the categories of *Vorhandenheit*) of the phenomenon of *Sorge*. Will is an essential distortion of *Sorge* according to the categories of metaphysical thinking and *Sorge* is the ground of the metaphysical category of the will. Heidegger's account of human existence is, then, on the one hand, absolutely different from that of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and, on the other, essentially connected to theirs through a shared concern with what is ultimately the same phenomenon.

Chapter 7:

Temporality

The primary task of *Sein und Zeit*, we are told, is to determine the ontological horizon from which the question of being can be raised, that is, the horizon of any understanding of being as such. According to Heidegger, to understand something always requires that it be projected [*entworfen*] onto a *horizon*, conceived, roughly, as that which determines the illuminated arena within which the matter can be understood. He refers to Plato for whom the form of the good – the sun in his cave allegory – first makes knowledge possible in so far as it illuminates the domain of what can be known. In Heidegger's sense, the form of the good would be the horizon for all possible knowledge.

Time – or more precisely what he calls in *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* “*Temporalität*” – is, for Heidegger, the horizon for any understanding of being whatsoever. It is the horizon for any understanding of being whatsoever in so far as it forms the most basic structural determination of the being of *Dasein*, to which an understanding of being belongs. Accordingly, it first makes ontology as a science possible.

To anticipate the discussion to follow, we might say that, forming the horizon of any possible understanding of being, time constitutes the structural possibility of unconcealment and concealment as such; that is: constitutes the *structurality* of unconcealment and concealment. Time is itself *truth*, for Heidegger: ‘So wird Zeit der erst zu bedenkende Vorname für die allererst zu erfahrende Wahrheit des Seins.’¹ And: ‘Zeitlichkeit ist der Vorname für die Wahrheit des Seyns’². Thus it is itself the clearing of being: ‘[D]as Wesen der Zeitlichkeit bestimmt sich aus dem Seyn als die mit dem Seyn wesende, in ihm er-eignete

¹ Einleitung zu “Was ist Metaphysik?”, *Wegmarken*, p. 377

² *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, p. 95 Thus the withheld third division of *Sein und Zeit*, which was supposed to outline the temporality of being as such, should be understood as having the task of the thinking of the *truth* of being. All of Heidegger's later thinking moves within its orbit. For the temporality of being temporalises itself as its *history*. It is for the same reason that the history of being is at the same time the history of truth.

*Lichtung der Ereignung.*³ And of course being is itself unconcealment; thus: 'Zeit ist der Name für das als Unverborgenheit selbst wesende Sein.'⁴ And: "'Sein" ist in "Sein und Zeit" nicht etwas anderes als "Zeit", insofern die "Zeit" als der Vorname für die Wahrheit des Seins genannt wird, welche Wahrheit das Wesende des Seins und so das Sein selbst ist.'⁵ As the *structurality* of unconcealment and concealment, time is the structure of truth, and thus of being itself. Indeed, we might say that, for Heidegger, time is the structure *par excellence*; that structurality, which makes all other structure first possible: *structurality as such*.

Our first task will be to clarify Heidegger's claim that time is the basic ontological constitution of *Dasein*. We have already examined, in connection with Aristotle, that which Heidegger calls the everyday or vulgar concept of time. Heidegger distinguishes from this vulgar concept of time what he calls *Zeitlichkeit* – primordial temporality –, the ontological time that he outlines as the basic constitution of the being of *Dasein*. We have seen that the being of *Dasein* in its totality is grounded in the structure of *Sorge*. Heidegger's first task is to show the way in which the structural unity of *Sorge*, or its ontological possibility, is grounded in primordial temporality. This means to show how primordial temporality is that which makes something like the constitution of the being of *Dasein* in its factual existence first possible (and therefore something like an understanding of being, which belongs essentially to the constitution of this being, first possible).

Temporality and *Sorge*

We outlined Heidegger's *Sorge* structure as follows: *Sich-vorweg-schon-sein-in-(der-Welt-) als Sein-bei (innerweltlich belegendem Seienden)*. Heidegger claims that the three constituents of this structure, *Sich-vorweg*, *Schon-sein-in*, and *Sein-bei*, correspond to, and, in their essential structural unity, are first made possible by, the three constituents of the structure of temporality: future, past and present. Temporality is what first makes possible the unitary structure of *Sorge*. He writes: 'Zeit ist nichts, was draußen irgendwo vorkommt als Rahmen für Weltbegebnisse; Zeit ist ebensowenig etwas, was drinnen im Bewußtsein irgendwo abschnurrt, sondern sie ist das, was das Sich-vorweg-sein-im-schon-sein-bei, d. h. was das Sein der *Sorge* möglich macht.'⁶

The *Sich-vorweg* of *Dasein* is grounded in its existentiality. We have seen that *Dasein* is always concerned about its being in so far as it is always already related to a possibility of its being. Related to a possibility of its being, *Dasein* always exists "for the sake of itself" [*Umwillen seiner selbst*]. The *Sich-vorweg* of the structure of *Sorge* aims to

³ *Zur Auslegung von Nietzsches II unzeitgemässer Betrachtung*, p. 94

⁴ *Metaphysik und Nihilismus*, p. 130

⁵ Einleitung zu "Was ist Metaphysik?", *Wegmarken*, p. 376

capture the character of *Dasein*'s being whereby it is always already related to a possibility of its being for the sake of itself. Being related to a possibility of its being is only possible in so far as *Dasein* is futural [*zukünftig*] in its being.

The *Schon-sein-in* of *Dasein* is grounded in its facticity. *Dasein* is always already *geworfen* into a world in which it finds itself. Finding itself already *geworfen* into a world is only possible in so far as *Sorge*, the constitution of being of *Dasein*, is essentially determined as past [*gewesen*; better translated as “has-been”]. As long as it still factically is, *Dasein* is *gewesen*; that is, essentially determined by “has-been-ness” in the constitution of its being. ‘[*Dasein*] ist nur, wie es faktisch ist, in der Weise, daß es das Seiende, das es ist, *je schon gewesen ist*.’⁷

The *Sein-bei* of *Dasein* is grounded in its *Verfallensein*. *Dasein* is always already in a world encountering beings. Such absorption in the world is made possible only in so far as beings are present [*anwesend*] to *Dasein*, which in turn is possible only in so far as *Dasein*'s existential constitution is determined by the present [*Gegenwart*].

Heidegger concludes: ‘Die Zeitlichkeit ermöglicht die Einheit von Existenz, Faktizität und Verfallen und konstituiert so ursprünglich die Ganzheit der Sorgestruktur.’⁸ Just as it is important not to conceive of the *Sorge* structure as being constructed from the putting together of its constitutive moments, so is it important not to conceive of temporality as being constructed from the conjunction of its elements. This would be to conceive of these elements as *vorhanden*, and therefore temporality itself as in some sense a being; but Heidegger is emphatic: ‘Wir nennen die ursprüngliche Zeit mit Absicht *Zeitlichkeit*, um auszudrücken, daß die Zeit nicht überdies noch vorhanden ist, sondern daß ihr Wesen zeitlich ist. Das heißt: Zeit “ist” nicht, sondern zeitigt sich.’⁹ This differentiates primordial temporality from the vulgar understanding of time, which understands “future”, “past” and “present” in terms of *Vorhandenheit* – as determinations of the “now”. What is in the future is the not-yet now, what is in the past is the no-longer now. Nows are determined as either earlier or later than other nows. Temporality, on the other hand, is to be conceived – and this cannot be emphasised enough – as an essential *unity*. Each of its moments is only possible on the basis of the other two; each of its moments “contains” already the other two within it. This means that temporality itself is, in its unity, temporal [*zeitig*] – whereas time in the vulgar sense is *itself* nothing temporal. ‘Die Zeitlichkeit ist selbst die in der ekstatischen Zeitigung sich einigende ekstatische Einheit.’¹⁰ Each of its moments “temporalises itself” from out of the other two, in terms of their basic unity. It itself is therefore not determined by

⁶ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 442

⁷ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 375

⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 328

⁹ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 264

¹⁰ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 266

the earlier or later; that is, original temporality is not to be conceived on the model of *succession*. 'Die Zeitigung bedeutet kein "Nacheinander" der Ekstasen. Die Zukunft ist *nicht später* als die Gewesenheit und diese *nicht früher* als die Gegenwart. Zeitlichkeit zeitigt sich als gewesende-gegenwärtigende Zukunft.'¹¹ (And note the emphasis on the future in the last sentence here). If it were, *Sorge* would have to be understood on the model of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*. Instead, it makes such temporal determinations as earlier and later, before and after first possible in so far as it organises *Dasein's* dealings in the world.¹² Thus the ecstasy of having-been is not to be conceived as somehow earlier than the other two and the ecstasy of the future somehow later. Temporality refers to the way in which *Dasein* is in its existential structures, and in this sense is no simple replacement for the vulgar concept of time as successive. Rather, as we shall see, it is the primordial phenomenon that, by virtue of an essential disfigurement, first makes this vulgar concept possible. Temporality provides the *structurality* by which *Dasein* can existentially – and that means factically – be as *Sorge*. It is the inner constitution of *Dasein's* factual existentiality, and therefore grounds every one of the individual phenomena that have been unearthed in the course of the existential analytic.¹³

Instead of being understood in terms of *Vorhandenheit*, the structural elements of temporality are to be understood, according to Heidegger, as "ecstases" [*Ekstasen*]. This word comes from the Greek *ἐκστασις* meaning "displacement", or "movement outwards". With it, Heidegger wants to capture the intrinsic "beyond-ness" or "outside-ness" that he attributes to each of the structural elements of temporality, which themselves first ground the possibility of a beyond-ness or outside-ness as such, that is an *openness*. This is their essential character of *Entrückung*, "carrying-off", "removal". He writes: 'Die ursprüngliche Zeit ist in sich selbst...außer sich...das Außer-sich schlechthin. Sofern dieser ekstatische Charakter die Zeitlichkeit kennzeichnet, liegt im Wesen jeder Ekstase, die sich nur in der Zeitigungseinheit mit den anderen zeitigt, eine *Entrückung nach...*, *auf etwas hin* in einem formalen Sinne. Jede Entrückung ist in sich selbst *offen*. Zur Ekstase gehört eine

¹¹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 350

¹² Note: 'Das Rechnen mit der Zeit ist konstitutiv für das In-der-Welt-sein.' [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 333]

¹³ These thoughts make a nonsense of William Blattner's book *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*. Nothing could distort the thrust of Heidegger's thinking any more than the casting of him as an idealist. If Heidegger fails to overcome the realist-idealist dichotomy then his whole thought collapses without further ado. Indeed, as we have seen, Heidegger characterises the metaphysical understanding of being as *idea*. To label him an idealist, then, would whitewash the very proposal of raising the question of being, as the attempt to step beyond such an understanding of being. Blattner encapsulates Heidegger's temporal idealism in the following proposition: 'If *Dasein* did not exist, time would not obtain.' [p. 232] But in so far as *Dasein* is nothing more than time – understood as original temporality –, it is hard to see what relation of dependence that could amount to idealism is supposed to apply here! Indeed, it would be closer to the truth to call Heidegger a temporal realist in so far as time is the truth of *being*. Nevertheless all such categorisations take *Dasein* and time to be things of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*. For Blattner, *Dasein* is simply the metaphysical *subject*, temporality its way of organising its experience. Only within the orbit of this framework can talk of realism and

eigentümliche *Offenheit*, die mit dem Außer-sich gegeben ist.¹⁴ In the unity of its ecstases, temporality is intrinsically *openness*. '[Zeit] ist wesentlich ein Sich-öffnen'¹⁵.

It is the character of *Entrückung* that opens a *horizon*. To temporality belongs essentially an ecstatic horizon, opened, or, perhaps better, traced out by the displacement that characterises each of its ecstases as a beyond- or outside-itself, and within which openness itself, in the broadest sense, is first possible. Heidegger writes: 'Der Horizont ist die *offene Weite*, wohinein die *Entrückung* als solche außer sich ist. Die *Entrückung* öffnet und hält diesen Horizont offen. Als ekstatische Einheit von Zukunft, Gewesenheit und Gegenwart hat die Zeitlichkeit einen durch die Ekstase bestimmten Horizont.'¹⁶

In its character of *Entrückung*, temporality is intrinsically directional, it has an intrinsically directional momentum [*Schwung*]¹⁷. It is an ecstatic-horizontal directionality "towards" the *future*. 'Die Zeitlichkeit zeitigt sich primär aus der Zukunft.'¹⁸ We have seen that the existentiality of *Dasein* in general is constituted in the projection of *Dasein* onto possibilities of its being for the sake of which it is. This understanding projection determines the *Bedeutsamkeitganzheit* that itself structures *Dasein's* world. Such a projection is intrinsically futural; the existentiality of *Dasein*, determined as *Sich-vorweg*, is a projection towards futural possibilities of its being. The futural determination of *Dasein's* existentiality is grounded in the directionality of temporality, which is therefore itself to be determined as primarily futural – although such a priority of the future in the constitutive ecstases of temporality in no way breaks up their fundamental unity.

A further characteristic of temporality that Heidegger emphasises is its *finitude*. As we shall see below, *Dasein* is in its being always already related to its *death*. The finitude of existence is constituted by the mortality of *Dasein*. But the existentiality of *Dasein* is determined by mortality not merely at that moment when *Dasein* factually dies, but rather always in so far as *Dasein* still is. Existentially conceived, death is not an event that will happen at some point in *Dasein's* future; *Dasein's* existentiality is always already related to the *utmost possibility of its non-being*. It is the finitude of temporality that makes this relation to its death, its understanding projection onto the utmost possibility of its non-being, possible for *Dasein*. It does this in so far as the primary ecstase of the future *closes* *Dasein's* projection onto possibilities of its being, thus making the understanding of the eventual possibility of its non-being first possible, and thus grounding *Dasein's* existential relation to its death. It does this in so far as it is itself closed; that is, intrinsically and already determined

idealism make sense. There could be no cruder misunderstanding of *Sein und Zeit*, and this cripples Blattner's animadversion as a whole.

¹⁴ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 378

¹⁵ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 271

¹⁶ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 378

¹⁷ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 268

in relation to the fundamental possibility of nothingness, of its ceasing to temporalise. 'Der ekstatische Charakter der ursprünglichen Zukunft liegt gerade darin, daß sie das Seinkönnen schließt, das heißt selbst geschlossen ist und als solche das entschlossene existenzielle Verstehen der Nichtigkeit ermöglicht.'¹⁹ As we shall see more clearly below, this closure of the ekstase of the future, this finitude of *Dasein's* temporality, which grounds *Dasein's* relation to its own non-being, makes existentiality as such – essentiality constituted as *Sorge*, concern for *being* – first possible.

Having laid bare the way in which the composite structure of *Sorge* is grounded in the unity of temporality, Heidegger reiterates his analyses of the moments of being-in-the-world with the intention of demonstrating the particular way in which they are rooted in primordial temporality. We do not need to follow his recapitulation here. For our purposes it suffices to grasp more clearly the way in which existentiality is grounded in temporality. Temporality is the interplay of *presence* and *absence*. There are two ekstases of absence; one of presence. Crucially, however, absence is itself a mode of presence, and to this extent ancillary. 'Auch das Vergangene und Zukünftige ist Anwesendes, nämlich außerhalb der Gegend der Unverborgenheit. Das ungegenwärtig Anwesende ist das Ab-wesende. Als dieses bleibt es wesensmäßig auf das gegenwärtig Anwesende bezogen, insofern es entweder in die Gegend der Unverborgenheit hervorkommt oder aus ihr weggeht. Auch das Abwesende ist Anwesendes und, *als* Abwesendes aus ihr, in die Unverborgenheit anwesend.'²⁰

The possibility of existentiality is grounded in this presence-absence structure of temporality. Only in so far as there is this interplay, can presence be conceived ecstatically, that is, dynamically, can the movement of existentiality take its shape. Only in so far as the future is absent presence can there be an existential projection towards it. Only then can there be existential *possibilities* at all. The absent presence of the future constitutes, as it were, the gradient, down which projection rolls, the curvature of existential space which shapes *Dasein's* projections. Existentiality is only possible on the basis of temporality. Of course this means that temporality makes being-in-the-world first possible, and thus the presence of a

¹⁸ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 273

¹⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 330

²⁰ Der Spruch des Anaximander, *Holzwege*, p. 320 The issue here is commonly the ground of much confusion and embarrassment on the part of the commentators (for example, Frederick Olafson, *Heidegger and the Philosophy of Mind*; Taylor Carman, "On Being Social: A Reply to Olafson"; William Blattner, *Heidegger's Temporal Idealism*): Does Heidegger understand the meaning of being to be presence; or is that understanding precisely what he is setting out to overthrow? So let us state the matter clearly: 'Sein heißt Anwesen.' [Was Heißt Denken?, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 136] In so far as absence is itself a mode of presence, Heidegger in *no* sense undermines this understanding of being with *Sein und Zeit*. What he undermines, is a *particular way* of understanding being as presence, namely, as *Vorhandenheit*, as static (constant) or perhaps as *mere* presence, as presence not itself encompassing absence – as presence not understood in terms of truth as *un-concealment*. Joseph Kockelmans puts it like this: 'Heidegger wished to bring the one-sidedly accentuated "continuous present" back into the full, pluridimensional time, in order then to try to understand the meaning of Being from the thus originally experienced time.' [*On the Truth of Being*, p. 65]

world: the “*Da*” of *Da-sein* as such. Only on the basis of temporality is unconcealment possible at all. For time is the truth of being. And in so far as disclosure always involves the understanding of being, temporality must be the condition of possibility for understanding being at all.

Temporality and Historicity

Postponing further discussion of these issues for now, our next task is to ask about the connection between the temporality of *Dasein* and the possibility of *history*. [*Geschichtlichkeit* is to be translated as “historicity”, and *Historie* as “historiography”.] Our guiding consideration is the question of how the history of being in its essential structures – which are still to be made clearer – is first made possible by the temporality that is the ontological determination of the being of *Dasein*, and thus how *Dasein* is the ground of history as the history of being. The history of being is, for Heidegger, the most fundamental determination of history: history as the “holding sway” of being itself. He writes: ‘Die Geschichte ist Geschichte des Seyns und deshalb Geschichte der Wahrheit des Seyns’²¹ And: ‘Geschichte ist Wesung der Wahrheit des Seyns.’²² And even: ‘Das Er-eignis ist die ursprüngliche Geschichte selbst’²³. But: ‘Der Weg zum Wesen der Geschichte, aus der Wesung des Seyns selbst begriffen, ist “fundamentalontologisch” vorbereitet durch die Gründung der Geschichtlichkeit auf die Zeitlichkeit.’²⁴ It is this grounding that is attempted in *Sein und Zeit*. ‘Die Analyse der Geschichtlichkeit des Daseins versucht zu zeigen, daß dieses Seiende nicht “zeitlich” ist, weil es “in der Geschichte steht”, sondern daß es umgekehrt geschichtlich nur existiert und existieren kann, weil es im Grunde seines Seins zeitlich ist.’²⁵ In what does this attempt consist?

What is it that makes the stone of an ancient Greek temple somehow historical when the rocks lying on the beach beside it, just as old, are not? The answer, Heidegger claims, is that the temple belonged to the *world* of a people of the past. Whilst the rocks played no significant role in their world, the temple did; the temple itself determined significances in their world. But world is an ontological determination of *Dasein*; it would appear that historicity has essentially to do with *Dasein*’s worldliness. Thus: ‘Geschehen der Geschichte ist Geschehen des In-der-Welt-seins.’²⁶ And: ‘Mit der Existenz des geschichtlichen In-der-Welt-seins ist Zuhandenes und Vorhandenes je schon in die Geschichte der Welt

²¹ *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, p. 93

²² *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, p. 98

²³ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 32

²⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 33

²⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 376 Originally italicised.

²⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 388 Originally italicised.

einbezogen.²⁷ But what does it mean that the temple belongs to the world of a people of the *past*? *Dasein* is never itself simply past, so long as it still *exists*. Nevertheless, in so far as it is essentially determined by *having-been*, *Dasein* can be what Heidegger calls “*da-gewesen*”, “having-been-there”. Heidegger writes: ‘Die noch vorhandenen Altertümer haben einen “Vergangenheits”- und Geschichtscharakter auf Grund ihrer zeughaften Zugehörigkeit zu und Herkunft aus einer gewesenen Welt eines da-gewesenen Daseins.’²⁸ But *Dasein* does not first become historical on the basis of the fact that it is *da-gewesen*. Rather, it can – and must – become *da-gewesen* because its ontological constitution is already determined by historicity. But how is it that *Dasein* is capable of becoming *da-gewesen*? In what does the historicity of *Dasein* consist? In what sense is historicity included in the temporal determination of *Dasein*’s being?

Dasein’s being as *Sorge* is factual existence. It is essentially determined by the understanding projection onto possibilities of being. What these possibilities factually are, Heidegger insists, is not for the ontological-existential analysis to determine. Nevertheless, in so far as *Dasein* is *geworfen* into them, their horizon is determined in advance. The horizon that determines what counts as an existential possibility for *Dasein* is given over to it as a legacy [*Erbe*] from worlds of the past. In the mode of authenticity: ‘Die Entschlossenheit, in der das Dasein auf sich selbst zurückkommt, erschließt die jeweiligen faktischen Möglichkeiten eigentlichen Existierens *aus dem Erbe*, das sie als geworfene *übernimmt*.’²⁹ The determination of possibilities by the legacy given over to *Dasein* is the essential historicity of *Dasein*’s factual existentiality, the essential historicity of *Dasein*’s being as *Sorge*. In so far as temporality is the ecstatic unity of the *Sorge*-structure, this historicity – that is, the possibility of history as such – is grounded in the temporality of *Dasein*.

The essence of history is thus the taking up of possibilities bequeathed as a legacy in a futural projection. This explains what might be called the continuity of history – a history is structurally always continuous, the evolving unity of a single discourse.³⁰ But it might be

²⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 388 Originally italicised.

²⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 380-381

²⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 383

³⁰ At the beginning of his discussion of historicity in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger frames the issue in terms of the question of what he calls the *Erstreckung* [the “stretching-out”, or “extension”] of *Dasein*’s life between birth and death. In order to account for the historicity of *Dasein*, it might be thought, one has to account for this stretching-out. Initially, this is understood in terms of the totality of a succession of experiences coming and going in time but through which a single *self* persists. These experiences have, of course, the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*. But the being of *Dasein*, determined in terms of temporality, is never to be understood as anything *vorhanden*. The stretching-out of *Dasein* must rather be somehow constitutive of *Dasein*’s existence. ‘Das Dasein füllt nicht erst durch die Phasen seiner Momentanwirklichkeiten eine irgendwie vorhandene Bahn und Strecke “des Lebens” auf, sondern erstreckt *sich selbst* dergestalt, daß im vorhinein sein eigenes Sein als Erstreckung konstituiert ist. *Im Sein* des Daseins liegt schon das “Zwischen” mit Bezug auf Geburt und Tod.’ [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 374]

objected that the fact that *Dasein* always already finds itself within a legacy means little more than that *Dasein* stands in history; not that history itself is constituted by *Dasein*'s mode of being. But this would be to mistake Heidegger's ontological analysis for an ontical one. Whilst it is true of course that *Dasein* stands in history; this could only be possible in so far as its being is in advance essentially determined by historicity. And in so far as history is always the history of world, and world is an ontological determination of *Dasein*, *Dasein*'s historicity must make history as such possible in the first place. For, as the history of world, history is the history of *disclosure*, that is, of *unconcealment* as such – world being a determination of the *Da*. History is necessarily history of the *truth* of being, and in so far as *Dasein* is the site on which being opens itself up in its truth, there can be history only on the basis of *Dasein*: 'Inwiefern ist die Zeitlichkeit wesentlich für das Wesen der Geschichte? (vgl. "Sein und Zeit") Nicht weil das "Geschehen" "in" der "Zeit" verläuft, sondern weil "Zeit" einen Wesensbezug zur Wahrheit des Seyns hat und Geschichte die Wesung dieser Wahrheit ist'³². Thus: 'Der Grund der Geschichtlichkeit des Menschentums ist seine Zugewiesenheit in die Wahrheit des Seyns'³³. This is the reason why history in the West necessarily *begins* (at least *first* begins), when the first thinker experiences unconcealment as such: 'daß im Zeitalter des Griechentums das Sein des Seienden zum Denkwürdigen wird, ist der Beginn des Abendlandes, ist der verborgene Quell seines Geschickes.'³⁴³⁵

This is further to say that the "persistence of the self" is grounded in the being of *Dasein*. The notion that the self's persistence must be sought for within the sum of the experiences that, added together, constitute a life stems from a conception of *Dasein* rooted in inauthenticity. The question concerning the stretching-out of a life is premised, claims Heidegger, on *Dasein* having already lost itself, having already been ontologically scattered across a multiplicity of experiences in time. Understood in terms of the authenticity of *Dasein*'s being, the stretching-out is already included in its ontological constitution. Ontologically, *Dasein* does not need to be put together again out of pieces that cumulatively form its life. Heidegger writes: 'Die Entschlossenheit des Selbst gegen die Unständigkeit der Zerstreuung ist in sich selbst die *erstreckte Ständigkeit*, in der das Dasein als Schicksal Geburt und Tod und ihr "Zwischen" in seine Existenz "einbezogen" hält.' [*Sein und Zeit*, pp. 390-391] Understood according to the mode of being of authenticity, *Dasein* already is ontologically stretched out between birth and death; the self already has, in its ontological constitution, its persistence. The question concerning the scattering of *Dasein* across a life-span of experiences is, of course, grounded in the vulgar understanding of time.

³¹ Of course, history is usually understood in terms of a whole people or a culture. Heidegger writes: 'Wenn aber das schicksalhafte Dasein als In-der-Welt-sein wesentlich im Mitsein mit Anderen existiert, ist sein Geschehen ein Mitgeschehen und bestimmt als *Geschick*. Damit bezeichnen wir das Geschehen der Gemeinschaft, des Volkes. Das Geschick setzt sich nicht aus einzelnen Schicksalen zusammen, sondern wenigstens als das Miteinandersein als ein Zusammenvorkommen mehrerer Subjekte begriffen werden kann.' [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 384] Here, it would seem, the *Geschick* is grounded in the historicity of *Dasein*. But in this context it has not yet taken on its being-historical significance. See footnote 37 below.

³² *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, p. 98

³³ *Besinnung*, p. 182

³⁴ *Logos, Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 219 See also the quote that opened chapter one.

³⁵ According to Heidegger, the possibility of historiography is rooted in the historicity of *Dasein*. '[D]ie historische Erschließung von Geschichte ist an ihr selbst, mag sie faktisch vollzogen werden oder nicht, ihrer ontologischen Struktur nach in der Geschichtlichkeit des Daseins verwurzelt.' [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 392] And: "'Geschichte" ist nicht nur "Gegenstand" der Historie, sondern Grund ihrer

History, however, is the history of being; indeed: 'Das Seyn als Er-eignis ist die Geschichte'³⁶ – but this in so far as it is the history of the holding sway of truth. If *Dasein* is the locality in which truth holds sway, then the structurality of the history of being must be grounded in the structurality of *Dasein*. At this stage in our considerations only a structural parallel need be drawn. This consists simply in the correlation between the two beginnings, which structure the history of being, and the two most basic modes of temporalisation which form the substructure of *Dasein*'s ontological constitution: authenticity and inauthenticity. In subsequent chapters we shall explore the nature of the relations of grounding that pertain within this correlation.³⁷

Authentic temporality is described in terms of the following characteristics: *Vorlaufen* as the ecstasy of the future; *Augenblick* as the ecstasy of the present; *Wiederholung* as the ecstasy of the past. Inauthentic temporality takes in contrast: *Gewärtigen* as the ecstasy of the future; *Gegenwärtigen* as the ecstasy of the present; *Vergessen* as the ecstasy of the

Möglichkeit. Nur was eigentlich Geschichtlich ist, kann historisch sein; der Mensch ist historisch, weil er geschichtlich ist, und er ist geschichtlich, weil er "zeitlich" ist.' [*Zur Auslegung von Nietzsches II unzeitgemässer Betrachtung*, p. 93] Historiography takes as its object the past, and is therefore only possible in so far as the past is already in some way accessible. Only in the *Gewesenheit* that grounds the historicity of *Dasein*'s being is the past first made accessible. The object of history is "da-gewesene" world. But historiography is not grounded in the historicity of the being of authentic *Dasein*. In other words, historiography understands history from out of the historicity of *Dasein*'s inauthenticity. Corresponding to the vulgar understanding of time, historiography understands history in terms of a mere succession of past events or happenings – rather than as the happening [*Ereignis*] of the truth of being as such. Therefore, it must be, according to later texts, *overcome* by the historicity of *Dasein*'s authenticity, which is historicity *grounded in the truth of being*: 'Im Beständnis der Wahrheit des Seyns müssen wir jene ursprüngliche Geschichtlichkeit erreichen, durch die alle Historie überwunden ist.' [*Besinnung*, p. 167] And: 'Die Herrschaft der Historie wird nur durch die Geschichte, durch eine neue Entscheidung und erstmalige Erfragung der Wahrheit des Seyns überwunden.' [*Besinnung*, p. 169] For historiography is to be understood as an essential consequence of the structures of metaphysical thinking: 'Im Wesen der Historie liegt, daß sie sich auf das Subjekt-Objekt-Verhältnis gründet... Alle Historie endet im anthropologisch-psychologischen Biographismus.' [*Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 494]

³⁶ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 494

³⁷ In Heidegger's lecture *Zeit und Sein* from 1961 we find the following: 'Weil man überall das Seins-Geschick nur als Geschichte und dieses als Geschehen vorstellt, versucht man vergeblich, dieses Geschehen aus dem zu deuten, was in "Sein und Zeit" über die Geschichtlichkeit des Daseins (nicht des Seins) gesagt ist. Dagegen bleibt der einzig mögliche Weg, schon von "Sein und Zeit" her den späteren Gedanken über das Seins-Geschick vorzudenken, das Durchdenken dessen, was in "Sein und Zeit" über die Destruktion der ontologischen Lehre vom Sein des Seienden dargelegt wird.' [*Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 9] Would this not seem to imply that we are on the wrong track in presuming to find the ground of the structure of the history of being in the existential analysis of *Dasein*? No, for, on the one hand, we are not grounding this structure in the historicity of *Dasein*, and are rather grounding both *Dasein*'s historicity and the structure of the history of being in the temporality that is the ontological determination of *Dasein*, and, on the other hand, we are not taking the *Seins-Geschick* in terms of a successive, chronological (and ontological) happening; rather, we are understanding it in terms of the unfolding of the structurality of the history of being. Nevertheless, only in so far as *Dasein* is essentially characterised by historicity can there be history as being's *Geschick*. The deconstruction of the history of ontology is, of course, the first form that the philosophy of the history of being takes.

past.³⁸ Authentic temporality is a retrieval of the possibilities of the past in the clear sight of the *Augenblick* for the running ahead towards possibilities of the future; inauthentic temporality merely awaits the possibilities of the future to arrive for it, absorbed in those of the present, having forgotten those of the past.³⁹

The distinction of these two modes of temporality is clear. It is most manifest perhaps in regards to the ecstasy of the present. The authentic present is the *Augen-blick*, the moment of *sight*, in which temporal being itself is “seen”, unconcealed in its truth. As the moment of truth, in which time itself as the truth of being is – perhaps implicitly – disclosed, the moment that is the *Augenblick* is in an important sense “beyond” or “outside” time – precisely by being authentically in time.⁴⁰ *Gegenwärtigen*, in contrast, carries all the reverberations of the metaphysical thinking of static objectivity (*Vorhandenheit*) and the absorption, the *Verfallen* of *Dasein*, in those beings immediately present to its concern. In *Gegenwärtigen* only beings are disclosed, those things that stand across or opposite *Dasein* in the course of its dealings in the world; being as such, in its temporality, the truth of being, is accordingly assigned to oblivion. Furthermore it is essentially isolated from the inauthentic ecstasies of past and future; time has broken up into distinct existences: the *now* consequently takes precedence in its inauthentic interpretation. The originary unity of projective temporality is covered over – the past is forgotten, the future merely awaited. The modes of absence constitutive of presence are concealed. Being is constant presence. Only in the mode of authenticity does *Dasein* expressly maintain the temporal unity constitutive of its being, retrieving understandingly the existential possibilities handed down or given over to it in its facticity, and throwing them forward again with knowing resolution in its futural surge.⁴¹

³⁸ Cf. *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, § 20, c) and *Sein und Zeit*, §68, a). There is some confusion in the secondary literature concerning whether or not inauthentic temporality is captured by the vulgar concept of time. This cannot be the case, for inauthentic temporality is a mode of original temporality, whereas time in the vulgar sense is nothing temporal at all. Rather, the vulgar concept of time is the result of the inauthentic understanding – which itself is inauthentic temporality – thematising time in terms of the categories of objects of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*.

³⁹ And thus the *legacy* determined by *Dasein*'s historicity can either be explicitly taken over or forgotten.

⁴⁰ Heidegger explicitly acknowledges Kierkegaard in connection to the concept of *Augenblick*. Kierkegaard's word for what is arguably the same phenomenon is literally the same: *øjeblik*.

⁴¹ Another common confusion in the literature concerns whether original temporality is modally indifferent as regards authenticity and inauthenticity, or whether original temporality is the same as authentic temporality. Of course, both claims are right. On the one hand, the temporal structure that is the ontological constitution of *Dasein* can either take the form of authentic temporality or inauthentic temporality; but, on the other, the authentic mode of temporality is precisely original temporality as it authentically is, that is, without essential *distortion* in its temporal structure.

Michel Haar is confused by this issue throughout the first part of his *Heidegger and the Essence of Man*, and Blattner is particularly vexed by a passage in *Sein und Zeit*, which seems to suggest that original temporality is only authentic temporality: ‘Wenn daher die der Verständigkeit des *Daseins* zugängliche “Zeit” als *nicht* ursprünglich und vielmehr entspringend aus der eigentlichen Zeitlichkeit nachgewiesen wird, dann rechtfertigt sich gemäß dem Satze, *a potiori fit denominatio*, die Benennung der jetzt freigelegten Zeitlichkeit als *ursprüngliche* Zeit.’ [p. 329] *Zeitlichkeit* is here named twice, once taking the adjective *eigentliche*, once taking the adjective *ursprüngliche*. Blattner

professes to find 'no way to reread it to help my interpretation' viz. that original temporality is modally indifferent as regards authenticity and inauthenticity. But the passage should never have been read to contradict his thesis in the first place. For "*eigentliche Zeitlichkeit*" is here being contrasted, not with *uneigentliche Zeitlichkeit*, but with the time accessible to *Dasein*'s (everyday) understanding, that is, time in the vulgar sense; thus *eigentliche* here does not have its nomenclatorial Heideggerian meaning. It functions as it ordinarily does in German usage – it means actual, real, true, original, also genuine; it is not meant technically at all.

Von Herrmann is clear about this issue: 'Die ganzheitliche Struktur des Auf-sich-zukommens-Auf-sich-zurückkommens-Gegenwärtigens ist die formal-indifferente existenzial-ontologische Zeitlichkeitsstruktur; indifferent gegenüber dem existenzialen Unterschied von Eigentlichkeit und Uneigentlichkeit. Als solche liegt sie sowohl der eigentlichen als der uneigentlichen Zeitlichkeit zugrunde.' [*Subjekt und Dasein*, p. 83]

Chapter 8:

Mortality

Death remained a central theme for Heidegger throughout his philosophical career. It plays not only an essential role in the existential analytic of *Sein und Zeit*; it is also of central importance to the later thinking, particularly in relation to the conceptuality of *das Geviert*, the fourfold, where it defines the being of man: *die Sterblichen*. The conception of death employed in these contexts, and, in particular, the role that it plays in regard to being as such, does not change. Indeed, as we shall see, the consideration of Heidegger's understanding of death reveals very clearly the nature of the relation of the existential analysis to the later thinking of the truth of being.

To begin with we shall examine the concept of death in the context of the existential analysis. Here it is initially introduced in terms of an attempt to uncover a possible *Ganzsein* of the being of *Dasein*. With the outlining of the structure of *Sorge*, the structural totality of *Dasein* has been formulated – the totality of those structures that, taken together, define its ontological constitution. This structure is, however, essentially temporal. Through the concept of the *Ganzsein* of *Dasein* Heidegger is looking for the ontological determination of the temporal totality of *Dasein's* being. This would be to ontologically define the temporal finitude of *Dasein*. This becomes a problem because of the very structure of *Sorge* itself. We saw that the primary moment of *Sorge* is *Sich-vorweg*. This names the fact that, existing always for the sake of itself, *Dasein* is always already temporally related to a possibility of its being. 'Dieses Strukturmoment der Sorge sagt doch unzweideutig, daß im *Dasein* immer noch etwas *aussteht*, was als Seinkönnen seiner selbst noch nicht "wirklich" geworden ist. Im Wesen der Grundverfassung des *Daseins* liegt demnach eine *ständige Unabgeschlossenheit*.'¹ So long as *Dasein* still is, it is always related to something still outstanding and is therefore "unfinished" or "incomplete". How is it then possible to understand *Dasein* in the temporal completeness of its being? But Heidegger writes: 'Das Gelingen der *vorbereitenden*

¹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 236

Interpretation des Daseins, die Seinsstruktur des Daseins aus ihm selbst herauszuholen, gründet darin, daß von vornherein in der thematischen Ansetzung der Analyse dieses Seiende selbst – Dasein in seiner Ganzheit – gewonnen ist.² Clearly, an understanding of death, of the finality of *Dasein*, is of the utmost importance here.

This is the problematic in terms of which Heidegger introduces the phenomenon of death to the existential analytic. Nevertheless, what is of relevance to our concerns is Heidegger's phenomenological explication of death and the subsequent function that death plays in the existential analytic.

Death, mortality, is simply *Dasein's* essential *finitude*. As an ontological determination of *Dasein*, death is to be considered as an existential. Heidegger is asking after the ontological meaning of death as a basic ontological *possibility* of the being of *Dasein*. He is therefore concerned to distinguish from the existential understanding of death other possible ways of understanding it. It is requisite also to ascertain the correct mode of access to the phenomenon. For securing an adequate understanding of death faces a basic problem, namely, that, in so far as *Dasein* precisely *dies*, the possibility of experiencing and interpreting death is, at the critical moment, taken away from it. Death is the loss of the "Da". *Dasein* is, however, always in a world with others that also die. Does the death of other "*Daseins*" ground the possibility of an existential understanding of death? Heidegger answers negatively. To experience the death of another is not at all to experience the ontological "coming-to-the-end" as it determines the other himself. The death of *Dasein* is also not to be conceived according to the model of the death of living beings ontologically dissimilar to *Dasein*. The mode of death peculiar to plants and animals Heidegger terms *Verenden*, "perishing".³

Death could nevertheless be considered to be the opposite of *life*. Life is researched through biology and psychology, both of which respectively have their own conception of death. These conceptions themselves are based upon a, perhaps implicit, ontology of life. But *life*, as a basic possibility of the being of *Dasein*, must, according to Heidegger, be determined in the first place from out of the ontological constitution of *Dasein*: being-in-the-world – existentiality.⁴ The existential conceptualisation of death, understood as the conceptual opposite of life, cannot, therefore, be determined out of the biological or psychological conceptions; nor, claims Heidegger, can it be determined out of any

² *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 424

³ To my knowledge, Heidegger never distinguishes the ontological determination of animals from that of plants, which, in light of the question of death, rather brings out the jejuneness of Heidegger's speciesism – animals surely do not bear essentially the same relation to their death as do plants.

⁴ And it is a very important question as to whether his structural analyses are rich enough to do justice to so plenteous a phenomenon as life, whether *Dasein* could ever really be *alive* before it essentially dies.

ethnological or biographical conceptions. Outside of the existential analysis of death stands also any question about what might lie “after” death, as well as any theodicy of death.

Any characterisation of death, however, must attribute to it the character of an *end*, or an *ending*. Heidegger begins his analysis by attempting to fasten the categorial determination of end and the related concept of totality in their application to the death of *Dasein*. In so far as it is always temporally related to a possibility of its being, *Dasein* is, in terms of its ontological constitution, always already related to something still “outstanding”. In what way is this outstanding not-yet to be understood? In so far as it concerns the being of *Dasein* as existence, what is not-yet is not to be considered as something of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*. It is not to be considered as anything that *Dasein* is to simply become, in the way in which, to use Heidegger’s example, a fruit becomes ripe. Correspondingly, the end of *Dasein* that is its death cannot be conceived simply in terms of the completion or the finishing of something. These determinations are attributable only to a being of the mode of being of either *Vorhandenheit* or *Zuhandenheit*. Heidegger writes: ‘So wie das Dasein vielmehr ständig, solange es ist, schon sein Noch-nicht *ist*, so *ist* es auch schon immer sein Ende. Das mit dem Tod gemeinte Enden bedeutet kein Zu-Ende-sein des Daseins, sondern ein *Sein zum Ende* dieses Seienden. Der Tod ist eine Weise zu sein, die das Dasein übernimmt, sobald es ist.’⁵ And: ‘Als immer schon bevorstehend, gehört der Tod zum Dasein selbst auch dann, wenn es noch nicht ganz und noch nicht fertig ist, also nicht im Sterben ist.’⁶

Dasein is always already, in so far as it still is, *Sein zum Ende*, being towards the end, being towards death. The attempt to grasp the phenomenon of this being towards death of *Dasein* in its ontological foundation must take the existence of *Dasein* for its starting point. As we have seen, the ontological constitution of existence is structured by *Sorge*. Being towards death must be shown to be essentially grounded in the being of *Dasein* as *Sorge*, which is formulated out of the constitutive structural moments of existentiality, facticity and *Verfallen*. In what way does the phenomenon of death belong essentially to the structure of *Sorge*?

Being towards death, grounded in the existentiality of *Dasein*, has the character of the temporal relating of *Dasein* to a possibility of its being. Death is a possibility of the being of *Dasein*; one, like all of its possibilities, that *Dasein* itself must take up. It is, however, also a possibility unlike any other: being-in-the-world as such is at stake in the possibility of death, the possibility of there no longer being possibilities for *Dasein*. In so far as it concerns the being of *Dasein* as such, it is the possibility of the being of *Dasein* that most specifically belongs to *Dasein* itself. ‘Der Tod ist jeweilig der meine, d. h. er gehört zu mir, sofern ich

⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 245

⁶ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 432

bin.’⁷ As Guignon suggests, the possibility of death is the only existential possibility which cannot in principle be taken up by *anyone* else.⁸ In the face of the possibility of death, therefore, *Dasein* is *individuated* [*vereinzelt*], claims Heidegger; that is, removed from the network of its relations to others. Death is also a unique possibility in that it is utterly ineluctable. *Dasein* can never elude the possibility of its death. It cannot be “bypassed” – and this, it must be remembered, is no proclamation concerning the biological necessity of death, or of the particularly parlous nature of existence; it is an ontological determination of death in so far as it is a possibility of the existentiality of *Dasein*. Putting these characteristics of the existential possibility of death together, Heidegger writes: ‘So enthüllt sich der *Tod* als die *eigenste, unbezügliche, unüberholbare Möglichkeit*. Als solche ist er ein *ausgezeichneter Vorstand*. Dessen existenziale Möglichkeit gründet darin, daß das *Dasein* ihm selbst wesenhaft erschlossen ist und zwar in der Weise des *Sich-vorweg*. Dieses Strukturmoment der *Sorge* hat im *Sein* zum *Tode* seine ursprünglichste Konkretion.’⁹

This is no arbitrary and incidental possibility of the being of *Dasein*; rather, in so far as *Dasein* is, it is always already *geworfen* into this possibility. Heidegger writes: ‘Die *Geworfenheit* in den *Tod* enthüllt sich ihm ursprünglicher und eindringlicher in der *Befindlichkeit* der *Angst*. Die *Angst* vor dem *Tode* ist *Angst* “vor” dem *eigensten, unbezüglichen und unüberholbaren Seinkönnen*. Das *Wovor* dieser *Angst* ist das *In-der-Welt-sein* selbst. Das *Worum* dieser *Angst* ist das *Sein-können* des *Daseins* schlechthin.’¹⁰ This *Angst* is no mere fear of death. It is the disclosure of the fact that *Dasein* always exists *geworfen* towards its death. The possibility of death is determined by the *facticity* of *Dasein*.

Of course, as we have seen, for the most part *Dasein* flees what the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* discloses towards the familiarity of inner-worldly beings; it is essentially determined by *Verfallen*, by *Sein-bei*. In the flight of *Angst*, *Dasein* conceals its death from itself; indeed, the flight of *Angst* is henceforth to be essentially understood as the flight from the existential possibility of death. ‘In diesem verfallenden *Sein bei*... meldet sich die *Flucht* aus der *Unheimlichkeit*, das heißt jetzt vor dem *eigensten Sein zum Tode*.’¹¹

Heidegger concludes that the ontological possibility of the death of *Dasein* is grounded in the structure of *Sorge*. Only a being with the ontological constitution of *Sorge* can be a being towards death. But on the other hand, being towards death completely determines the *Sorge* structure. *Sorge* – existentiality – and death are mutually implicative. This is most apparent in so far as *all* existentiality can be conceived as reciprocation to the ubiquitous possibility of death. On the one hand, almost all our actions are carried out within

⁷ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 429

⁸ Cf. *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge*, p. 135.

⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 250-251

¹⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 251

¹¹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 252

the parameters laid down by the most basic project of staying alive, from eating to driving, and even to participation in dangerous sports. On the other, our projections always more or less coincide with a basic life-projection that is determined by the knowledge that a life-span is only of such and such a length of time, that our sojourn in being is essentially limited.¹²

In so far as being towards death is grounded in the structure of *Sorge*, it must essentially be determined by the two fundamental modes of being of *Sorge*: authenticity and inauthenticity. Indeed, we shall now see that authenticity and inauthenticity are precisely to be grasped in terms of existentiality's "reaction" to the possibility of death.

The existentiality of being towards death is essentially to be conceived as a relation of *Dasein* to its self. In the mode of inauthenticity this self is, however, as we have seen, the self of *das Man*. Initially and for the most part it is *das Man* that dies. Heidegger writes: 'Das Dasein sagt: "Man stirbt", weil darin gesagt ist: "Niemand stirbt", d. h. je nicht gerade ich selbst... Im "Man stirbt" ist der Tod von vornherein auf eine Seinsmöglichkeit nivelliert, die in gewissem Sinne niemandes Möglichkeit ist. Damit aber ist der Tod in dem, was er ist, von vornherein abgedrängt.'¹³ Death is not considered to be the peculiar possibility that precisely individuates *Dasein* in its being, but rather something that affects no one in particular. One knows of course that "one must die someday too", as Heidegger expresses it, but for the moment death is a long way off and remains therefore unthreatening. Death is considered to be merely an event that takes place at some point within the world – that is, as something *vorhanden* –, and consequently its character of *possibility* is stripped away. If the event of death is near at hand, however, it is *feared*. It is feared because inauthentic *Dasein* does not know the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*; even though – and, indeed, precisely because – it is a fleeing from the possibility of death disclosed in *Angst*. Inauthenticity, grounded in *Sorge*, is to be understood as a flight before the ultimate finitude of existence. This flight conceals death as a possibility, but of course does nothing to change the fact that *Dasein* is, in its existential essence, always already being towards death.

Fundamentally, although certain that death will one day occur, inauthentic *Dasein* conceals the fact that death is at *any* moment a possibility. The fact that death is *certain* and yet is entirely *indeterminate* with regards to its "when", is for Heidegger an essential characteristic of the possibility of death. The concealment of the indeterminacy of the possibility of death is what gives the mode of being of inauthenticity its particular "certainty" of death, and thus determines the disclosure of this possibility in this mode of being.

¹² Of course, life-span is determined qualitatively by the circumstances of the *body*, which typically starts out young and capable before eventually becoming old and decrepit, and, of course, corporeal capacity is the ultimate arbiter of existential projection. Indeed, *Dasein* only dies – that is, *existentially* dies, not just *biologically* dies – only in so far as it is bodily. But Heidegger omits to mention corporeality in relation to the existential elaboration of death. See chapter 14 for more on this lacuna.

¹³ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 435-436

In the mode of being of authenticity, on the other hand, *Dasein* precisely does not attempt to flee and cover up the possibility of death. Instead, in the mode of authenticity, the possibility of death is fully uncloaked for *Dasein's* understanding in its character as possibility – as the certain and indeterminate possibility of the impossibility of existence (although of course not in the first place conceptually). This is not to say that authentic *Dasein* “takes up” this possibility of death, that is, attempts to realise it – although perhaps this first becomes a genuine option; rather, authentic *Dasein* relates itself to the possibility of death whilst preserving its character as mere possibility. ‘Die eigentliche Seinsmöglichkeit Tod ist nur dann ergriffen, wenn das Seinsverhältnis zu dieser Möglichkeit so ist, daß sie dabei als eine Gewißheit meines Seins verstanden wird, und zwar eine Gewißheit vom Charakter des Unbestimmten und eine Gewißheit des Seins, die meine ist.’¹⁴ Heidegger terms such a relation towards the possibility of death a *Vorlaufen* [a “running forwards” or a “running on ahead”]. In *Vorlaufen*, *Dasein* as such is revealed to itself in so far as the possibility of its death is absolutely specific to it, and thus *the possibility of being authentically is revealed to Dasein*. Here, it seems, there is a *reciprocal* relationship between authenticity and death. On the one hand, the mode of being of authenticity reveals the possibility of death for what it is, and, on the other, the possibility of death reveals the possible authenticity of *Dasein's* being. To gain more clarity concerning this relationship Heidegger analyses further the meaning of *Vorlaufen* towards death.

As we saw above, ‘Der Tod ist *eigenste* Möglichkeit des Daseins. Das Sein zu ihr erschließt dem Dasein sein *eigenstes* Seinkönnen, darin es um das Sein des Daseins schlechthin geht.’¹⁵ *Vorlaufen* towards death discloses to *Dasein* its own-most existential possibility in so far as it discloses the being of *Dasein* itself, about which this possibility is concerned. In doing this it individuates *Dasein*, reveals to *Dasein* that for the most part it has lost itself to the self of *das Man*, tears *Dasein* out of the mode of being of inauthenticity and discloses the fact that it must itself take over its own-most possibility of being. Heidegger writes: ‘Das Vorlaufen zum Tode in jedem Augenblick des Daseins bedeutet das Sich-zurückholen des Daseins aus dem Man im Sinne des Sich-selbst wählens.’¹⁶ *Dasein* is brought explicitly before its capacity to be its self. Disclosing the possibility of death as inexorable, *Vorlaufen* towards death extirpates the incidental possibilities offered up by other “*Daseins*” or by inner-worldly beings and frees *Dasein* for making a choice regarding its life as a whole. Heidegger writes: ‘Weil das Vorlaufen in die unüberholbare Möglichkeit alle ihr vorgelagerten Möglichkeiten mit erschließt, liegt in ihm die Möglichkeit eines existenziellen

¹⁴ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 438

¹⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 263

¹⁶ *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Zeitbegriffs*, p. 440 Originally italicised.

Vorwegnehmens des *ganzen* Daseins, das heißt die Möglichkeit, als *ganzes Seinkönnen* zu existieren.¹⁷

Vorlaufen discloses death in its character as a certain but indeterminate possibility, the possibility of the *an-nihil*-ation of *Dasein*'s existence. As we have seen, the *Befindlichkeit* which accompanies the disclosure of this possibility is *Angst*. But as *Was ist Metaphysik?* makes clear, *Angst* is the disclosure of "the nothing" [*das Nichts*] – this is its essential determination. Thus Heidegger writes:

*Die Befindlichkeit aber, welche die ständige und schlechthinnige, aus dem eigensten vereinzelt Sein des Daseins aufsteigende Bedrohung seiner selbst offen zu halten vermag, ist die Angst. In ihr befindet sich das Dasein vor dem Nichts der möglichen Unmöglichkeit seiner Existenz. Die Angst ängstet sich um das Seinkönnen des so bestimmten Seienden und erschließt so die äußerste Möglichkeit. Weil das Vorlaufen das Dasein schlechthin vereinzelt und es in dieser Vereinzelung seiner selbst der Ganzheit seines Seinkönnens gewiß werden läßt, gehört zu diesem Sichverstehen des Daseins aus seinem Grunde die Grundbefindlichkeit der Angst. Das Sein zum Tode ist wesentlich Angst.*¹⁸

Authentic being towards death is disclosure of nothingness.¹⁹ But: 'Das Nichts ist die Ermöglichung der Offenbarkeit des Seienden als eines solchen für das menschliche Dasein.'²⁰ Thus death stands in a disclosive relation to the truth of being. Heidegger tells us evocatively that: 'Der Tod ist der Schrein des Nichts, dessen nämlich, was in aller Hinsicht niemals etwas bloß Seiendes ist, was aber gleichwohl west, sogar als das Geheimnis des Seins selbst. Der Tod birgt als der Schrein des Nichts das Wesende des Seins in sich. Der Tod ist als der Schrein des Nichts das Gebirg des Seins.'²¹ Authentic being towards death, determined essentially by the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, is the *apophatic* disclosure of the truth of being as such. Coming face to face with its possible non-being, *Dasein* is thrown back onto the simple fact that it *is*, bringing being itself to unconcealment. It is for this reason that the analysis of death is of the utmost importance to the existential analysis of *Da-sein*, the site in which the truth of being holds sway. 'Die Einzigkeit des Todes im Da-sein des Menschen

¹⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 264 We mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that the existential consideration of death belonged to the attempt to fasten the possibility of a *Ganzsein* of the being of *Dasein*. It was suggested that such a *Ganzsein* is ontologically impossible in so far as the being of *Dasein* is always already determined by a relation to a "not-yet" of its being. We can now see that, 'In das Dasein, als das zu seinem Tod seiende, ist das äußerste Noch-nicht seiner selbst, dem alle anderen vorgelagert sind, immer schon einbezogen.' [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 259] Thus the possibility of a *Ganzsein* is already an ontological determinant of the being of *Dasein*, and the initial suggestion is therefore false.

¹⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 265-266

¹⁹ 'Der Tod ist als das Äußerste des Da zugleich das Innerste seiner möglichen völligen Verwandlung. Und darin liegt zugleich der Hinweis in das tiefste Wesen des Nichts.' [*Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 325]

²⁰ *Was ist Metaphysik?*, *Wegmarken*, p. 115

²¹ *Das Ding*, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 171

gehört in die ursprünglichste Bestimmung des Da-seins, nämlich vom Seyn selbst er-eignet zu werden, um seine Wahrheit (Offenheit des Sichverbergens) zu gründen.²² Only in so far as *Dasein* is *mortal*, that is, only in so far as *Dasein* is *finite*, is there disclosure of being – that is, disclosure as such – at all.

To this extent death is of equal importance to the philosophy of the history of being. In particular it is related to the possibility of the other beginning: ‘Aber nicht jeder braucht dieses Seyn zum Tode zu vollziehen und in dieser Eigentlichkeit das Selbst des Da-seins zu übernehmen, sondern dieser Vollzug ist nur notwendig im Umkreis der Aufgabe der Grundlegung der Frage nach dem Seyn, eine Aufgabe, die allerdings nicht auf die Philosophie beschränkt bleibt. Der Vollzug des Seins zum Tode ist nur den Denkern des anderen Anfangs eine Pflicht, aber jeder wesentliche Mensch unter den Künftig schaffenden kann davon wissen.’²³ And: ‘Der *Tod* kommt hier in den Bereich der grundlegenden Besinnung nicht, um “weltanschaulich” eine “Todesphilosophie” zu lehren, sondern um die *Seinsfrage* erst auf ihren Grund zu bringen’²⁴. In so far as death grounds the disclosure of the truth of being it grounds the essential relation of man to the truth of being, and therefore the possibility of the other beginning. There can be another beginning to history only in so far as mankind *exists*, according to his essence, *as mortal, sterblich*. ‘Die Sterblichen sind die Menschen. Sie heißen die Sterblichen, weil sie sterben können. Sterben heißt: den Tod als Tod vermögen. Nur der Mensch stirbt.’²⁵

For this reason the mortals play an essential role in Heidegger’s fourfold, the quaternion which at the advent of the other beginning gathers together as world, as the truth of the holding sway of being, and thus first enables things to be as they are, as things. Refusal of world, the age of modern technology, must persist until mankind enters into his essence as the mortal that he is. Only in so far as man exists as mortal can the holding sway of world come to pass.

But, we are told, ‘Der Mensch ist noch nicht der Sterbliche.’²⁶ He is not yet capable of death as death, of the mortal essence given over to him. He remains estranged from this essence until the inceptual eschaton, the *Ereignis* of the truth of being, comes to pass, until he is essentially appropriated for the safeguarding of being’s truth, his essential relationship to being as being.

Der Tod ist weder das leere Nichts, noch ist er nur der Übergang von einem Seienden zu einem anderen. *Der Tod gehört in das aus dem Wesen des Seyns ereignete Dasein des Menschen.* So

²² *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 283

²³ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 285

²⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 286

²⁵ *Das Ding, Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 171; and word for word identical (but with “*als*” in the penultimate sentence italicised): *Bauen Wohnen Denken, Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p. 144.

birgt er das Wesen des Seyns. Der Tod ist das höchste Gebirg der Wahrheit des Seyns selbst, das Gebirg, das in sich die Verborgenheit des Wesens des Seyns birgt und die Bergung seines Wesens versammelt. Darum vermag der Mensch den Tod nur und erst, wenn das Seyn selbst aus der Wahrheit seines Wesens das Wesen des Menschen in das Wesen des Seyns vereignet. *Der Tod ist das Gebirg des Seyns im Gedicht der Welt.*²⁷

The connection between death and the truth of being can be brought out in another way. Death is a possibility of the structure of *Sorge*. The structure of *Sorge* first makes death as death possible. But the structure of *Sorge* is grounded in temporality. Being towards death is the utmost futurity of *Dasein*, death being the very last possibility of *Dasein*, and thus, whilst being towards death is only possible on the basis of original temporality, it is essentially determinative of it. Original temporality is essentially determined as finite. But as we noted in the previous chapter, temporality is to be conceived as the structural disclosure (unconcealment and concealment) which is the truth of being, and thus as the ground of man's relation to being. 'Daß der Tod in dem wesentlichen Zusammenhang der ursprünglichen *Zukünftigkeit* des Daseins in seinem fundamentalontologischen Wesen entworfen ist, heißt doch zunächst im Rahmen der Aufgabe von "*Sein und Zeit*": er steht im Zusammenhang mit der "Zeit", die als Entwurfsbereich der Wahrheit des Seyns selbst angesetzt ist. Schon dieses ist ein Fingerzeig, deutlich genug für den, der mitfragen will, daß hier die Frage nach dem Tod im wesentlichen Bezug steht zur *Wahrheit des Seyns* und *nur* in diesem Bezug'.²⁸

²⁶ Die Gefahr, *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 56

²⁷ Die Gefahr, *Bremer und Freiburger Vorträge*, p. 56

²⁸ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 284

Chapter 9:

Ek-sistentiality

How is disclosure possible at all? Our aim in this chapter is to outline Heidegger's final answer to this question by further investigating his claim that temporality is the condition of possibility for understanding being in general. Thereafter we shall examine the particular conception of truth that is implicated therein, and its decisive being-historical role. Much of what follows has been anticipated in previous explications.

Temporality as horizontal

Heidegger works out his claim that temporality is the condition of possibility for any understanding of being whatsoever in the second half of his 1927 lecture course *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*. What was delivered in this lecture course is the closest he ever came to publically articulating that which was originally planned as the third division of the first part of *Sein und Zeit*: "Zeit und Sein".¹ Part of the basic project of working out the question of the meaning of being, the attempt to lay bare the possibility for any understanding and interpretation of being whatsoever, time – or temporality – was here to be outlined as the *horizon* onto which all understanding as such, and thus understanding of being, necessarily projects. This amounts to the claim that the temporality of the being of *Dasein* is the condition of possibility for disclosure as such. For, for Heidegger, on the one hand, all understanding is grounded in an understanding of being, and, on the other, understanding as such is not to be differentiated from disclosure as such.

Heidegger argues for his basic thesis in two different ways. On the one hand, he puts his case as follows: all understanding of something requires its projection [*Entwurf*] onto a *horizon*. Inner-worldly beings are understood in terms of their *Zuhandenheit* or

¹ As Heidegger writes here: 'Der Versuch ["Zeit und Sein"] ist vernichtet, aber sogleich auf mehr geschichtlichem Wege ein neuer Anlauf gemacht in der Vorlesung vom S. S. 1927 [*Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*].' [Mein Bisheriger Weg, *Besinnung*, pp. 413-414]

Vorhandenheit – in terms of their *Bewandtnis* – in so far as they are projected onto the horizon of an understanding of being. But in so far as being is understood, it must in turn be projected onto a horizon. Temporality, as the condition of possibility of any understanding at all, is what forms the horizon onto which the understanding of being projects. It is the horizon upon which being can be disclosed at all, that is, the horizon of disclosure as such.

On the other hand, he argues as follows: ‘Die *Zeitlichkeit* ist die *Bedingung der Möglichkeit der Seinsverfassung des Daseins*. Zu dieser gehört aber *Seinsverständnis*, wenn anders das Dasein als existierendes zu Seiendem, das es nicht selbst und das es selbst ist, sich verhält. Sonach muß die *Zeitlichkeit* auch die *Bedingung der Möglichkeit des zum Dasein gehörigen Seinsverständnisses sein*.’²

These two arguments are ostensibly different. The basic thought of the first is that temporality forms the horizon upon which being is projected in so far as it is understood, since temporality is the horizon of all possible understanding; the basic thought of the second is that temporality must be the condition of possibility of *Dasein*’s understanding of being in so far as it forms the ontological constitution of *Dasein* to which an understanding of being essentially belongs. Crucially, these amount to the same thing: temporality forms the projective horizon for any understanding of being precisely in so far as it forms the ontological constitution of *Dasein*. This, however, allows us to understand *Dasein* as itself understanding-of-being, as that projective open region in which beings are first encounterable. *Dasein* is not a subject to which beings are subsequently disclosed; *Dasein* is itself simply disclosure of beings as such, the *clearing* within which beings *presence* [*an-wesen*]. *Dasein* as temporal structurality itself is the horizon of presence [*Anwesenheit*]. This further means that understanding of being is understanding of *Dasein*, *Dasein*’s understanding of its self. ‘*Weltverständnis* [understanding of being] ist...wesenhaft *Selbstverständnis*, und *Selbstverständnis* ist *Daseinsverständnis*.’³ In order to see this it is first important to understand the sense in which an understanding of being forms the horizon upon which all understanding of inner-worldly beings projects, and thereby the sense in which, for Heidegger, understanding something essentially requires a horizon.

We have seen that all understanding is projective upon possibilities of the being of *Dasein*. We have also seen that inner-worldly beings are only disclosed within the structures of the *Bewandtnisganzheit* that is constituted in this projection of *Dasein* onto possibilities. Inner-worldly beings are only disclosed in so far as *Dasein* projects itself onto possibilities of its being. These (*existenzielle*) possibilities are possibilities of *existence* (which is fundamentally to be determined as “being-possible” [*möglich-sein*]) and thus existence – that is, the being of *Dasein* – must already be in a certain way disclosed to *Dasein* in so far as it

² *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 388

projects itself upon them. 'Sofern aber in diesem existenziellen Verstehen das Dasein als Seiendes auf sein Seinkönnen entworfen ist, ist darin Sein im Sinne von Existenz verstanden. In jedem existenziellen verstehen ist ein Seinsverständnis von Existenz überhaupt beschlossen.'⁴ This means in the first place that inner-worldly beings are only disclosed to *Dasein* in so far as being – existence – is already disclosed to it in advance. 'In allem Verhalten zu Seiendem, sei es spezifisch Erkennen, was man meist als theoretisch bezeichnet, sei es praktisch-technisch, liegt schon ein Verständnis von Sein. Denn nur im Lichte des Seinsverständnisses kann uns Seiendes als Seiendes begegnen.'⁵ It means in the second place that, in so far as being is understood within a projection on possibilities of existence, a projection which in turn grounds the disclosure of inner-worldly beings, these inner-worldly beings are only disclosed within a prior *horizon* delineated or traced out by the understanding of being as the projection upon possibilities. Such projection demarcates the region, fixes those limits, within which beings can first show up.

Heidegger also expresses this thought in terms of what he calls the *transcendence* of *Dasein*. This word comes from the Latin *transcendere*, meaning to climb over or beyond, to surmount. Heidegger's usage of it, ignoring its long philosophical heritage, is explicitly literal. For him: 'Transzendenz bedeutet Überstieg.'⁶ "Überstieg", "climbing-over", is a movement implicating both something which is climbed over and something towards which it is climbed over. In accordance with the aims of the existential analysis of *Dasein*, the *Überstieg* does not have to do with the relation of a subjective sphere to an objective sphere. 'Die Transzendenz ist weder eine Beziehung zwischen einer Innensphäre und einer Außensphäre, so daß das, was in ihr überschritten würde, eine zum Subjekt gehörige Schranke wäre, die das Subjekt von der Außensphäre trennte. Die Transzendenz ist aber auch nicht primär die erkennende Beziehung eines Subjekts zu einem Objekt, die dem Subjekt als Zugabe zu seiner Subjektivität eignete.'⁷ Rather, it signifies that basic temporal dynamic by virtue of which beings can be disclosed for *Dasein*'s comportment within a world in the first place.

This happens insofar as *Dasein* transcends, climbs over, not towards objects or individual inner-worldly beings, but towards *world*. 'Zur Transzendenz gehört Welt als das, woraufhin der Überstieg geschieht.'⁸ In transcendence towards world, in which world is first understood as such, world is *opened up* as the horizon *within* which inner-worldly beings can

³ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, pp. 420-421

⁴ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 395 And further: 'Zunächst ist im existenziellen Verstehen das eigene Dasein als Seiendes erfahren und dabei das Sein verstanden.' [*Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 396]

⁵ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 390

⁶ Vom Wesen des Grundes, *Wegmarken*, p. 137

⁷ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, pp. 210-211

⁸ Vom Wesen des Grundes, *Wegmarken*, p. 141

first be constituted as inner-worldly beings (in terms of a *Bewandtnisganzheit*) and thus be encountered. 'Die Transzendenz, das Über-hinaus des Daseins, ermöglicht es, daß es sich zu Seiendem, sei es zu Vorhandenem, zu Anderen und zu sich selbst, als Seiendem verhält.'⁹ Only in terms of the transcendence towards world, claims Heidegger, could there be something like "objects" available standing opposite a "subject". Thus inner-worldly beings are themselves what transcendent *Dasein* "climbs over".

Thus only on the basis of transcendence can something like the "there" be constituted as the site of disclosure within which beings can first be encountered. Transcendence itself, therefore, claims Heidegger, is to be considered as the basic ontological constitution of *Dasein*. If it is only on the basis of transcendence that *Dasein* can take up a position within a world comporting itself amidst inner-worldly beings, and if this is definitive of the being of *Dasein*, then Heidegger is justified in equating the transcendence of *Dasein* with what we outlined above as being-in-the-world. Existence as such is transcendence. In so far as *Dasein* is, are beings already transcended – and not merely this or that particular being, but beings in a whole, according to the constitution of world, as that towards which *Dasein* transcends. '[D]ie Transzendenz ist nicht irgendein mögliches Verhalten...des Daseins zu anderem Seienden, sondern die Grundverfassung seines Seins, auf deren Grunde es sich allererst zu Seiendem verhalten kann.'¹⁰

We saw that the worldliness of the world is constituted by the projection of *Dasein* onto a possibility of its being – a "for-the-sake-of-itself" (*Umwillen seiner*). *Dasein*'s existence is always and essentially for the sake of itself, which is the meaning of outlining the fundamental ontological constitution of *Dasein* as *Sorge*. *The transcendence of Dasein is accomplished as this projection upon a possibility of its being*. It is for this reason that the transcendence of *Dasein* is transcendence towards world: world is formed in the projection of *Dasein* onto a possibility of its being for the sake of which it is, according to which inner-worldly beings as a whole are first disclosed, constituted in terms of the corresponding totality of *Bedeutsamkeit*.¹¹

We saw how being-in-the-world, as the ontological constitution of *Dasein*, is grounded in temporality. Temporality is thus also the ground or the inner possibility of the

⁹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 426

¹⁰ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 211

¹¹ It is also precisely in this transcendence for the sake of itself that the self of *Dasein* is constituted in turn. Heidegger writes: 'Was Übersteigen wird, ist gerade einzig *das Seiende selbst*, und zwar jegliches Seiende, das dem Dasein unverborgen sein und werden kann, mithin *auch und gerade* das Seiende, als welches "es selbst" existiert...Die Transzendenz konstituiert die Selbstheit...Sofern aber das Dasein als Selbst existiert – und nur insofern – kann es "sich" verhalten zu Seiendem, das aber vordem überstiegen sein muß.' [Vom Wesen des Grundes, *Wegmarken*, p. 138] And further: 'Nur Seiendes, zu dessen Seinsverfassung die Transzendenz gehört, hat die Möglichkeit, dergleichen wie ein Selbst zu sein. Die Transzendenz ist sogar die Voraussetzung dafür, daß das Dasein den Charakter

transcendence of *Dasein*, in so far as this transcendence is only possible as the self-temporalisation of temporality. 'Der ekstatische Charakter der Zeit ermöglicht den spezifischen Überschrittscharakter des Daseins, die Transzendenz und damit auch die Welt.'¹² The transcendence of *Dasein* is its world-constituting projection onto a possibility of its being for the sake of itself. This is only possible on the basis of the *Sich-vor-weg* as the temporal determination of the future, which, Heidegger claims, is the temporal ekstase out of which temporality primarily temporalises itself [*zeitigt sich*]. Only in so far as *Dasein* is futural in the very grounds of its being is something like a projection of itself onto a possibility of its being possible; that is, only in so far as *Dasein* is futural is transcendence possible and a world can be constituted. Only on the ground of the temporality of *Dasein*, then, can inner-worldly beings be disclosed at all. Only on the ground of temporality is something like understanding possible at all. Heidegger writes: 'Das Transzendieren zur Welt, das In-der-Welt-sein zeitigt sich als Zeitlichkeit und ist nur so möglich. Darin liegt: Welteingang geschieht nur, wenn Zeitlichkeit sich zeitigt. Und nur wenn das geschieht, kann Seiendes als Seiendes sich offenbaren. Sofern dieses aber nur möglich ist auf dem Grunde des Seinsverständnisses, muß die Möglichkeit des Seinsverständnisses in der Zeitigung der Zeitlichkeit liegen.'¹³ And only in so far as *Dasein* is futural in the grounds of its being can it exist for the sake of itself, and thus be ontologically characterised as *Sorge*.

If 'Seinsverständnis ist Transzendenz'¹⁴, then temporality must be the possibility of understanding being. Heidegger writes: 'Wenn wir sagen: Im existenziellen Verstehen des Daseins ist Sein verstanden, und wenn wir beachten, daß Verstehen ein Entwerfen ist, so liegt in dem *Verständnis von Sein* wiederum ein Entwurf: Das Sein ist nur verstanden, insofern es seinerseits *auf etwas hin entworfen ist*.'¹⁵ Temporality is the possibility of *Seinsverständnis* in so far as it forms the horizon onto which understanding projects being. In what sense exactly does temporality form a horizon?

Heidegger writes: 'Horizont – darunter verstehen wir den Umkreis des Blickfeldes. Aber Horizont, von *ὁρίζειν*, ist gar nicht primär auf Blicken und Anschauen bezogen, sondern besagt einfach an sich das Eingrenzende, Umschließende, den Umschluß...Nun sagen wir: jede Ekstase umschließt sich selbst, und zwar gerade als *ἐκστασις*.'¹⁶ Each ekstase is

eines Selbst hat. Die *Selbstheit* des Daseins *gründet in seiner Transzendenz*'. [*Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 425] *Dasein* understands its self on the basis of world.

¹² *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 428

¹³ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 274

¹⁴ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 280

¹⁵ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 396 It is important to note again that the understanding of being mentioned here is not a conceptual understanding. Nor does it grasp being in any sense as an object. It is rather a non-objective, pre-conceptual [*vorbegrifflich*] and therefore pre-ontological understanding of being. But, of course, this pre-ontological understanding of being is the necessary condition for the possibility of ontology as a science.

¹⁶ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 269

essentially characterised by an ec-static structure, that is, a structural displacement, a directional “carrying-off” [*Entrückung*], which, demarcating its own limit, delineates something like a light-giving (*Helle gebenden*)¹⁷ horizontal (or perhaps “linear”) “enclosure”. ‘Jede Ekstase als *Entrückung* zu... hat in sich zugleich und ihr zugehörig eine Vorzeichnung der formalen Struktur des *Wozu des Entrückung*. Wir bezeichnen dieses *Wohin der Ekstase* als den Horizont oder genauer das *horizontale Schema der Ekstase*.’¹⁸ The ekstase of the future first provides the original enclosure, thus the space and illumination [*Erhellung*]¹⁹, within which something like possibility can first be encountered, and thus forms a horizon within which something like the *Umwillen seiner* is first possible.²⁰ Thus, essentially entwined with the other two temporal ekstases, it provides the horizon within which the constitution of something like a world is first possible as the transcendence of *Dasein*, and thus grounds the possibility of *Seinsverständnis*. Temporality forms the horizon for understanding being in so far as it forms the enclosure within which something like a projection of *Dasein* onto a possibility of its being can take place, and thus within which something like existence can first be understood and with it world, and thus within which inner-worldly beings can first be illuminated. Temporality considered from this horizontal perspective Heidegger calls *Temporalität*: ‘Temporalität ist die ursprünglichste Zeitigung der Zeitlichkeit als solcher’²¹.

In §21 of ^{Die} *Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie* Heidegger seeks to demonstrate this concretely in terms of the temporal ekstase of the present and the understanding of the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit*. The mode of being of *Zuhandenheit* characterises tools, the most familiar of beings encountered in the world. We saw that Heidegger gives the name *Bewandtnis* to the constitution of this mode of being. Any single tool is only ever encountered within a totality of tools structured by *Bewandtnis* relations. These relations are fundamentally to be characterised in terms of what Heidegger calls “*Um-zu*”, “in-order-to”. Tools are tools in order to do or make such and such. Heidegger writes: ‘Dergleichen Seiendes wie Zeug begegnet uns als das Seiende, das es *an sich ist*, wenn wir *Bewandtnis*, *Bewandtnisbezüge* und *Bewandtnisganzheit* im vorhinein verstehen.’²² A tool can only be encountered as such in so far as it is projected in advance onto a network of *Bewandtnis* relations. ‘Das... Verstehen von *Bewandtnis* ist derjenige Entwurf, der dem *Dasein* allererst

¹⁷ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 402

¹⁸ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 429

¹⁹ Heidegger draws analogy to Plato’s *ἰδέα ἀγαθού* – that which illuminates the domain of the knowable. Cf. *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, pp. 400 ff.

²⁰ ‘[Die *Entrückung* gibt] als solche etwas vor: eben das *Künftige* als solches, *Künftigkeit* überhaupt, d. i. *Möglichkeit schlechthin*. Die *Ekstase* produziert nicht aus sich ein bestimmtes *Mögliches*, wohl aber den Horizont von *Möglichkeit* überhaupt, innerhalb dessen ein bestimmtes *Mögliches* etwa erwartet werden kann.’ [*Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik*, p. 269]

²¹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 429

²² *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 415

das Licht gibt, in dessen Helle dergleichen wie Zeug begegnet.²³ This is in turn only possible on the basis of *Dasein's* existence as *Umwillen seiner*. '[Dasein] versteht als existierendes dergleichen wie ein "umwille seiner selbst", weil sein eigenes Sein dadurch bestimmt ist, daß es dem Dasein als existierendem in seinem Sein um sein Seinkönnen geht. Nur sofern das Umwille eines Seinkönnens verstanden ist, wird dergleichen wie ein Um-zu (Bewandtnisbezug) enthüllbar.'²⁴

Thus *Bewandtnis*, as the ontological determination of *Zuhandenheit*, is fundamentally determined by the temporal ecstase of the future, within the horizon of which something like an *Umwille seiner* is first possible. In accordance with the unity of the temporal ecstases it is also determined by the ecstase of the present (precisely in so far as *Dasein* is using the tool, and thus is always together with the tool in order to do or make such and such), and by the ecstase of the past (in so far as the tool is maintained [*behalten*] in its use). The understanding of *Bewandtnis* is, then, temporally constituted. This understanding is, of course, not at all a thematic understanding. In our use of tools we are precisely not focused on the tools themselves; nor, so Heidegger claims, are we focused upon the work to be completed.²⁵ Rather, we simply move understandingly within the relations of "Um-zu", the *Bewandtnis* relations. *Bewandtnis* is thus understood – that is, the being of inner-worldly beings in the mode of *Zuhandenheit* is understood, which means that being as such is understood –, but this understanding is non-thematic, non-conceptual.

But how exactly does temporality, in terms of its horizontal structure, ground the disclosure, the presence of beings of the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit*, which constitutes this understanding?

Whilst inner-worldly beings are in general encountered entirely non-thematically in the course of *Dasein's* absorption in its inner-worldly possibilities, when they are broken or missing, or when they get in the way of the work, they become conspicuous as the tools that they are. Tools that are missing are tools that are not *present* – tools that are *absent*. *Zuhandenheit*, as the ontological constitution of tools, is essentially determined by *presence* and *absence*. Heidegger names this fundamental determination of the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit* with a Latinate expression: *Praesenz*.

In what sense is *Praesenz* different from *Gegenwart*? *Praesenz* is not *ecstatic*. *Praesenz* is rather that upon which whatever is determined by the temporal ecstase of *Gegenwart* is projected. 'Das Gegenwärtigen...entwirft das, was es gegenwärtigt, dasjenige, was möglicherweise in und für eine Gegenwart begegnen kann, auf so etwas wie *Praesenz*...

²³ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 416

²⁴ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 418

²⁵ Cf. *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 416.

Gegenwart entwirft sich in sich selbst ekstatisch auf Praesenz.²⁶ As the whereunto of the displacement of *Gegenwart*, *Praesenz* is the *horizontal* determination or *schema* of the temporal ecstase of *Gegenwart*, in virtue of which *Gegenwart* is an openness for encountering inner-worldly beings as *present*, that is, in terms of *Anwesenheit*. Projection upon *Praesenz* is the condition of possibility of *Anwesenheit*; in virtue of it every being encountered in the *Gegenwart* is always already understood in terms of *Anwesenheit* (which includes, of course, beings that are precisely *not* present). Heidegger writes:

Als Entrückung zu... ist die Gegenwart ein Offensein für *Begegnendes*, das somit *im vorhinein auf Praesenz hin verstanden ist*. Alles, was im Gegenwärtigen begegnet, ist aufgrund des in der Ekstase schon entrückten Horizontes, Praesenz, als Anwesendes, d. h. auf Anwesenheit hin verstanden. Sofern Zuhandenheit und Abhandenheit so etwas wie Anwesenheit und Abwesenheit, d. h. so und so modifizierte und modifikable Praesenz bedeuten, ist das Sein des innerweltlich begegnenden Seienden praesential, und das heißt grundsätzlich temporal entworfen. *Sein verstehen wir demnach aus dem ursprünglichen horizontalen Schema der Ekstasen der Zeitlichkeit*.²⁷

As the condition of possibility of *Anwesenheit*, presence, as such, temporality is the condition of possibility of the “*Da*”. “[*Zeitlichkeit*] ist als enthüllte da, weil sie das “*Da*” und seine Enthülltheit überhaupt ermöglicht.”²⁸ Comportment among present and absent beings within a world is only possible on the basis of the *praesential* schema of temporality. Temporality is *in itself* the fundamental projection [*Entwurf*] as such, which, opening the open region, the clearing for presence, makes all understanding possible.

The concept of *Temporalität* can now be determined. Heidegger writes: ‘Die so primär auf die horizontalen Schemata der Zeitlichkeit als Bedingungen der Möglichkeit des Seinsverständnisses hin genommene Zeitlichkeit macht den Gehalt des allgemeinen Begriffs der Temporalität aus. *Temporalität ist Zeitlichkeit mit Rücksicht auf die Einheit der ihr zugehörigen horizontalen Schemata*’²⁹.

If an understanding of being forms the horizon onto which the understanding of inner-worldly beings projects, and if *Temporalität* forms the horizon onto which the understanding of being projects, it might be wondered upon what the understanding of temporality itself projects. Heidegger gives the answer: ‘Weil die ekstatisch-horizontale Einheit der Zeitlichkeit in sich der Selbstentwurf schlechthin ist, als ekstatische das Entwerfen auf... überhaupt ermöglicht und mit dem zur Ekstase gehörigen Horizont die Bedingung der Möglichkeit eines Woraufhin, Wozu-hinaus überhaupt darstellt, kann gar nicht mehr gefragt

²⁶ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 435

²⁷ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 436

²⁸ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 437

²⁹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 436

werden, woraufhin die Schemata ihrerseits entworfen seien, und so in infinitum.³⁰ If *Temporalität* is the condition of possibility for all understanding as such, in so far as it makes possible projection in the first place, then there can be nothing more primordial upon which the understanding of *Temporalität* projects. The implication is that *Temporalität* itself forms the horizon for its own understanding.

Heidegger's discussion here concerns only the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit* and only the temporal ecstase of the present, but nevertheless the conclusion that he wishes to draw is supposed to hold for all modes of being and for all three temporal ecstases. Does that in any way make it problematic? In the first place it can be pointed out that Heidegger has always insisted that the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit* is the mode of being of inner-worldly beings in so far as they are encountered "in themselves". This is to say that the existentiality of *Dasein* is such that first and foremost, "always already", beings are disclosed within the structures of existentiality in the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit*. This justifies Heidegger's choice of *Zuhandenheit* in his attempt to demonstrate the temporality of all understanding of being. But in so far as he shows that all understanding has the character of a projection onto a horizon, and that, in so far as being is understood at all, this horizon must be temporality (*Temporalität*), he has justified the extension of his conclusions beyond merely the understanding of the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit*.

He writes: 'Die Ekstase der Gegenwart ist führend in der Zeitlichkeit des Umgangs mit dem Zuhandenen.'³¹ The focus on the temporal ecstase of the present is therefore justified in so far as Heidegger is considering the understanding of the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit*. But this focus does not jeopardise the generality of the conclusions which Heidegger draws, since the three ecstases of temporality form a horizontal unity.

Of course the focus on the temporal ecstase of the present is nevertheless significant in so far as it allows Heidegger to draw explicitly, through the concept of *Praesenz*, the connection of *Gegenwart* and *Anwesenheit*. Heidegger's basic thought here concerning the relation of time and being can be expressed simply as follows: being is (understood in terms of) *Anwesenheit*; but there can only be *Anwesenheit* in an ecstatic *Gegenwart*. Therefore time – ecstatic temporality – must be the ground of any understanding of being at all. This ground is to be construed in the form of a horizon due to the projective character of understanding, and thus time is the horizon for understanding being, the horizon for the meaning of being.

This thought connects this early attempt to demonstrate the relation between time and being with Heidegger's subsequent thinking.

³⁰ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 437

³¹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 438 Why is this? Because *Verfallen* is the existential correlative of the ecstase of the present.

Zeit-Raum

In later writings, most notably in *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, Heidegger introduces the concept of *Zeit-Raum* [time-space]. What is this seemingly new conceptuality of time and how is it related to the earlier conceptuality of temporality?

One text which gives an expansive treatment of time-space is Heidegger's 1962 lecture *Zeit und Sein*. The relation of this work to *Sein und Zeit* is made clear:

Der Titel "Zeit und Sein" kennzeichnet im Aufriß der Abhandlung "Sein und Zeit" (1927) S. 39 den dritten Abschnitt des ersten Teils der Abhandlung. Der Verfasser war damals einer zureichenden Ausarbeitung des im Titel "Zeit und Sein" genannten Themas nicht gewachsen. Die Veröffentlichung von "Sein und Zeit" wurde an dieser Stelle abgebrochen.

Was der jetzt nach dreiundeinhalb Jahrzehnten verfaßte Text des Vortrags enthält, kann nicht mehr an den Text von "Sein und Zeit" anschließen. Zwar ist die leitende Frage die selbe geblieben, was jedoch nur heißt: Die Frage ist noch fragwürdiger geworden und dem Zeitgeist noch fremder.³²

Nevertheless, the lecture deals with the relationship between time and being, albeit ostensibly on a different horizon to *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*. For it deals with the relation between time and being as such, rather than the relation between temporality – as the being of *Dasein* – and *Dasein's* understanding of being. Nevertheless, structurally considered, the essential thought remains *exactly* the same: 'Sein heißt: Anwesen, Anwesenlassen: Anwesenheit', writes Heidegger on page 10, and then on page 11: 'Aber Gegenwart besagt...Anwesenheit.' Again, time and being are brought into relation to one another through the concept of *Anwesenheit*.³³ There can only be *Anwesenheit*, of course, in so far as there are *Menschen*. 'Anwesen geht uns an, Gegenwart heißt: uns entgegenweilen, uns – den Menschen.'³⁴ Whilst we shall return to determine the relation of these later thoughts to the existential analysis more precisely, it is clear even on the surface that, in so far as *Dasein*, the site of presence, determines the being of man, there is no disparity here.

Time and being both mean *Anwesenheit*. But in the later lecture, time is to be understood in terms of the concept of time-space. In the first instance, this concept designates the way in which the interplay of the unity of the three temporal dimensions³⁵ puts forth the

³² *Zur Sache des Denkens*, Hinweise, p. 91

³³ And again Heidegger here affirms that both past and future are also to be understood in terms of *Anwesenheit*, namely, as modes of *Abwesenheit*. He writes: '[Das] nicht-mehr-Gegenwärtige west in seinem Abwesen unmittelbar an, nämlich nach der Art des uns angehenden Gewesen...Im Gewesen wird Anwesen gereicht.' [p. 13] And: '[Das] Abwesen als das Anwesen des noch-nicht-Gegenwärtigen [geht] uns immer schon auf irgendeine Weise an..., d. h. anwest, ebenso unmittelbar wie das Gewesen. In der Zu-kunft, im Auf-uns-Zukommen wird Anwesen gereicht.' [p. 13]

³⁴ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 12

³⁵ In this text Heidegger speaks of the *dimensions* of time rather than its *ecstases*. We shall follow his usage and shall not pursue the question of what hangs upon this substitution.

open, spatial region of *Anwesenheit*: 'Zeit-Raum nennt...das Offene, das im Einander-sich-reichen von Ankunft, Gewesenheit und Gegenwart sich lichtet.'³⁶ The mutual interrelating of the three temporal dimensions, their "reaching" to and fro within and between one another, first opens up, or brings forth, a clearing of openness which is in essence *spatial*; that is, opens up a *fourth* dimension. Time-space is in essence four-dimensional; but in contrast to four dimensional space-time, time-space has three temporal dimensions and one spatial dimension. Only in and as the unity, the essential interrelation of these four dimensions is the constitution of presence, unconcealment as such, first possible. Heidegger's thinking here concerns the fact that the site of disclosure, the "there", only possible on the basis of time, must be in essence spatial.³⁷

"Dimension" here, however, must mean something radically new. The common conceptions of space and time are, according to Heidegger, derivative of time-space, and are rooted in metaphysical modes of thought. 'Raum und Zeit, je für sich vorgestellt und in der üblichen Verbindung, entspringen selbst aus dem Zeit-Raum, der ursprünglicher ist als sie selbst und ihre rechenhaft vorgestellte Verbindung.'³⁸ Fundamentally, they amount to the "mathematicising" of time-space, in virtue of which time and space are independently numerically determined and their independent measurement and thus calculation becomes possible. This numeration is the origin of the mathematico-physical concept of dimension.³⁹ Heidegger's point is that it is only in virtue of time-space that there is a clearing within which time and space can come to be dimensional in the first place. This is not to suggest that the traditional conceptions of time and space are *false*. Indeed, Heidegger would point out, they are *correct*. But correctness is not the primordial essence of truth. They are interpretations of a more original phenomenon than they themselves suggest; interpretations based on particular modes of thinking that have their essential origin in the ontological constitution of *Dasein*. They are essential historical consequences of the metaphysical thinking that is fundamentally grounded in the forgetting of the truth of being. Thus Heidegger insists that time-space can only be thought in the thinking which prepares the other beginning of the history of being, i. e. in a thinking which thinks otherwise than metaphysically.

³⁶ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, pp. 14-15

³⁷ One might presume that the difference between Heidegger's thinking here and that of *Sein und Zeit* is therefore to be found in the incorporation of spatiality with temporality. However this incorporation is already made in the early work's account of the spatiality of *Dasein*, which we have not undertaken to exposit. Just as the mutual interrelating of the three dimensions of time puts forth space – conceived as the arena of comportment (*Verhaltenheit* [Die *Verhaltenheit* ist der Grund der Sorge. Die *Verhaltenheit* des *Da-seins* begründet erst die Sorge als die das *Da* ausstehende Inständigkeit.' [Beiträge zur Philosophie, p. 35]]), so the self-temporalisation of original temporality opens up the spatiality intrinsic to existentiality.

³⁸ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 372

³⁹ This numeration is of course essential to the development of modern mathematical physics, and to the modern concept of nature in general. As such, it is essential to the development of modern technology.

Indeed time-space itself, claims Heidegger, belongs to the essence of truth. He writes, for example: 'der Zeit-Raum ist nur die Wesensentfaltung der Wesung der Wahrheit.'⁴⁰ For presence [*Anwesenheit*] and unconcealment (the primordial determination of truth) belong together: 'Im Hinblick auf das Anwesende gedacht, zeigt sich Anwesen als Anwesenlassen...Anwesenlassen zeigt darin sein Eigenes, daß es ins Unverborgene bringt. Anwesen lassen heißt: Entbergen, ins Offene bringen.'⁴¹ As the essential unfolding of the essence of truth, time-space is historical. It is the site into which the historical *Geschick* of being is sent.

Truth

Before drawing our discussion of the existential analysis of *Dasein* to its conclusion it is pertinent to give a more detailed account of Heidegger's thoughts on truth, which have received only interspersed and desultory clarification in the course of proceedings heretofore. Truth is essential to the existential analysis and Heidegger gives a thorough treatment of it in §44 of *Sein und Zeit*, the fulcrum between its first and second divisions. It is of course not of less importance for the history of being, which can also be characterised as the history of truth. Most significant of all, perhaps, is the fact that Heidegger's re-conceptualisation of truth is the pivot of that historical turning which is the overcoming of metaphysics. The *Kehre* can only be understood in the light of Heidegger's re-conceptualisation of truth.

We have already seen that truth conceived in terms of correctness defines the essence of metaphysical thinking, and that this conception stems from the transformation of the essence of truth away from its inceptual sense – *Ἀλήθεια*. Whether of the proposition or of the representation, which in any case amount to the same thing, truth as correctness implies the subject-object schema. Correctness is thought in terms of the correspondence [*adaequatio*] of the subject [*intellectus*] and the object [*res*]. Heidegger's overcoming of metaphysics fundamentally takes the form of re-conceiving the essence of truth beneath this framework to retrieve the inceptual sense preserved in its etymology. This is essential to the thinking of being, the other beginning of the history of being, and thus also to the question of being. It goes hand in hand with the introduction of *Dasein* and the existential analysis thereof.

Just as metaphysics is an essential possibility of the constitution of being of *Dasein*, so too is correctness an essential configuration of truth; Heidegger does not claim that it is simply false, as some commentator have assumed – how could he? Rather, he attempts to show the derivative nature of this understanding of truth, derivative from original truth

⁴⁰ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 386

⁴¹ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 5

conceived in the binary form of unconcealment and concealment. In both §44 of *Sein und Zeit* and the lecture *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* (first given in 1930) Heidegger presents an account of the derivative nature of truth as correctness.

In *Sein und Zeit* he points out that a proposition – for example, about a painting hanging on a wall – does not refer to any mental or psychological “image” or representation, no *ideal* content, but refers to the real painting. For otherwise the simple *perception* of the painting would not be capable of adjudicating as to whether the proposition is true or false. He writes: ‘Jede Interpretation, die hier irgend etwas anderes einschleibt, das im nur vorstellenden Aussagen soll gemeint sein, verfälscht den phänomenalen Tatbestand dessen, worüber ausgesagt wird.’⁴² The proposition must be conceived as simply indicating the thing itself, *discovering* [*entdecken*] it, plucking it out of concealment. For what proves the proposition is just the particular way in which the thing is discovered. Accordingly, Heidegger claims, ‘Die Aussage *ist wahr*, bedeutet: sie entdeckt das Seiende an ihm selbst.’⁴³ The notion of discovering leaps over any need for a *relation* to creep into the determination of truth; truth is simply the discovering of the thing itself as it itself is.

Heidegger’s argument here responds to a familiar problem. If the concept of representation is allowed to determine the relation of correspond~~ence~~²ance, then the subject will never be in any position to verify or confirm the truth of his or her propositions, for he or she could then never step beyond the sphere of representations to get a good look at the things themselves that are the objects of judgement.⁴⁴ But once propositions are conceived as *discovering* the things themselves as they are (or, are not, as the case may be), the way is open for the abandonment of the relational schema in favour of a simple notion of disclosure [*Erschlossenheit*].

In the lecture *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* Heidegger further points out that the discovering of the proposition is only possible given a prior comportment towards beings. Such comportment always operates within an openness which first allows beings to be discovered. This comportment is, of course, to be conceived existentially. Beings can only be discovered in so far as they stand within existential structures; beings are always discovered within specific comportments, within the “directionality” of existentiality, that is,

⁴² *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 217-218

⁴³ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 218

⁴⁴ Ernst Tugendhat points out that Heidegger’s claim in this regard does not meet every correspondance theory of truth. Husserl’s, for example, where the relation of correspondance is held to pertain between two ideal contents, would be unaffected. Be this as it may, once Heidegger’s derivation of the traditional concept of truth from original truth as disclosure has been fully presented, the grounds which motivate Husserl’s transcendental reduction, upon which this conception of correspondance depends, are undermined.

its structure as projection.⁴⁵ This grounds Heidegger's claim that the essence (i. e. the inner possibility) of truth – still in the sense of correctness – is *freedom*: 'Die Offenständigkeit des Verhaltens als innere Ermöglichung der Richtigkeit gründet in der Freiheit. *Das Wesen der Wahrheit, als Richtigkeit der Aussage verstanden, ist die Freiheit.*'⁴⁶

Now freedom, conceived here as 'die Eingelassenheit in die Entbergung des Seienden als eines solchen'⁴⁷, itself requires a *prior* openness, which is the disclosure that is *Da-sein* itself. Consequently, Heidegger designates disclosure the original truth. In *Sein und Zeit* he writes: 'Mit und durch sie [die *Erschlossenheit*] ist Entdecktheit, daher wird erst mit der *Erschlossenheit* des Daseins das *ursprünglichste* Phänomen der Wahrheit erreicht.'⁴⁸

It is this original disclosure that makes truth as correctness first possible. 'Die Wahrheit als Richtigkeit des Vorstellens setzt, um das sein zu können, was sie ist – Angleichung an den Gegenstand –, die Offenheit des Seienden voraus, wodurch das Seiende erst gegen-standsfähig und das Vor-stellen zum Vermögen wird, etwas als solches vor sich zu bringen. Diese Offenheit erwies sich damit als der Grund der Möglichkeit der Richtigkeit.'⁴⁹ The grounds for interpreting truth purely in terms of correctness, as a relation of correspondance between a subject and an object, lie, as we shall see in more detail below, in the constitution of *Dasein* itself, that temporal structure which first makes truth – disclosure – possible. *Dasein*, we can briefly intimate here, initially understands the proposition as something of the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit*. In so far as it takes the being about which the proposition is uttered as similarly of the mode of being of *Zuhandenheit* or *Vorhandenheit*, it must also conceive of a relation between the two – something of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*. This relation, rooted in original disclosure, comes to be understood in terms of *correspondence*, *Übereinstimmung*, *adaequatio*. 'Die Entdecktheit des Seienden rückt mit der Ausgesprochenheit der Aussage in die Seinsart des innerweltlich Zuhandenen. Sofern sich nun aber in ihr *als Entdecktheit von...* ein Bezug zu Vorhandenem durchhält, wird die Entdecktheit (Wahrheit) ihrerseits zu einer vorhandenen Beziehung zwischen Vorhandenen (intellectus und res).'⁵⁰ In the next chapter we shall show how this interpretation of the being of truth as *Vorhandensein* is grounded in the ontological constitution of *Dasein* as *Verfallen*.

⁴⁵ A thought which is also expressed as follows: 'Die Lichtung für das Sichverbergen lichtet sich im Entwurf. Die Werfung des Entwurfs geschieht als Da-sein, und der Werfer dieser Wurfung ist jeweils jenes Selbst-sein, in dem der Mensch inständig wird.' [*Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 356]

⁴⁶ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 186

⁴⁷ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 189

⁴⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 220-221

⁴⁹ *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 92 And again: 'Die Wahrheit als Richtigkeit (*ὁμοίωσις*) hat ihren Grund in der Wahrheit als Unverborgenheit (*ἀλήθεια*)...Der Grund der *Richtigkeit* (*ὁμοίωσις*) ist die *ἀλήθεια*, die Unverborgenheit des Seienden.' [*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, pp. 97-98]

⁵⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 225 Originally italicised.

Freedom is the standing out into the openness amidst beings, a standing out into the clearing [*Lichtung*], which can now be understood in terms of the interplay of the dimensions of time-space. This standing out into time-space amidst beings Heidegger calls *Ek-sistenz* [ek-sistence]: 'Die in der Wahrheit als Freiheit gewurzelte Ek-sistenz ist die Aus-setzung in die Entborgenheit des Seienden als eines solchen.'⁵¹ He ascribes it to mankind. The ek-sistence of mankind is his taking up of his dwelling place, his abode, in *Dasein*. Mankind dwells within *Dasein*, the structural site of disclosure, only in so far as he ek-sists. The ek-sistence of man is the same as his *history*. Both begin at the same moment: that moment when, in ancient Greece, man first raises beings as a whole to unconcealment in his questioning. Ek-sistence is the standing out of man into the truth of being, into the site that is historical; that site at which time, truth, beings, being and man all combine to a focal point – the focal point that is *Ereignis*. It is thus essential to conceive of the clearing of truth as disclosure on analogy with a *happening* and not at all as a circumstance of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*.⁵²

In so far as mankind's ek-sistence is historical, Heidegger can claim that history as such is determined by the way in which beings are opened, revealed, the way in which, as he puts it, truth *holds sway* [west].⁵³ We have already seen that the *Geschick*, that which gives history its specific determination, is precisely to be conceived as a mode of revealing. This way in which beings are open is referred, in the lecture, to the notion of *Stimmung*, which we already introduced in relation to the *Befindlichkeit* that co-constitutes the being of the "there", disclosure. Heidegger writes: 'Jedes Verhalten des geschichtlichen Menschen ist, ob betont oder nicht, ob begriffen oder nicht, gestimmt und durch diese Stimmung hineingehoben in das Seiende im Ganzen.'⁵⁴ Thus: 'Das Verhalten des Menschen ist durchstimmt von der Offenbarkeit des Seienden im Ganzen.'⁵⁵ But if history is the history of unconcealment, nevertheless: 'Ohne die Irre wäre kein Verhältnis von Geschick zu Geschick, wäre nicht Geschichte... Jede Epoche der Weltgeschichte ist eine Epoche der Irre.'⁵⁶ Why is this?

Truth is *dis*-covering, *dis*-closure, *un*-concealment. Heidegger claims that to the essence of truth a corresponding covering, closure, *concealment* belongs. Truth is to be thought in terms of both concealment and unconcealment coequally. This marks Heidegger's departure from the originary Greek conception of truth as ἀλήθεια, a departure which many

⁵¹ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 189

⁵² 'Unverborgenheit des Seienden, das ist nie ein nur vorhandener Zustand, sondern ein Geschehnis.' [Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes, *Holzwege*, p. 41] And "*Ereignis*" was noted to the last word of this citation in Heidegger's own copy of the first edition (1950).

⁵³ 'Aus der Weise, wie das ursprüngliche Wesen der Wahrheit west, entspringen die seltenen und einfachen Entscheidungen der Geschichte.' [Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 191]

⁵⁴ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 192

⁵⁵ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 193

commentators have overlooked. Whilst the word ἀλήθεια expresses the experience of truth as unconcealment, it fails to capture the coequality of concealment. It does not yet fully articulate the duplicity of the way in which truth holds sway.⁵⁷

In *Sein und Zeit* the concealment proper to the essence of truth is expressed in terms of the *Un-wahrheit* that belongs constitutively to the being of *Dasein* in so far as it is ontologically determined as *Verfallen*: ‘Das Dasein ist, weil wesentlich verfallend, seiner Seinsverfassung nach in der “Unwahrheit”.’⁵⁸ The self of *das Man* and the accompanying publicness does not shut the disclosure of beings off, but distorts it, disfigures it, and thus disguises it: ‘Das Entdeckte und Erschlossene steht im Modus der Verstelltheit und Verschlossenheit...Das Sein zum Seienden ist nicht ausgelöscht, aber entwurzelt. Das Seiende ist nicht völlig verborgen, sondern gerade entdeckt, aber zugleich verstellt’⁵⁹.

In the lecture, this concealment is initially thought in terms of the *partiality* of the disclosure of beings. In so far as only specific beings are disclosed within a particular comportment, other beings are closed off, and crucially, beings as a totality, as a whole, are closed off. Disclosure is always finite. Indeed what is concealed first and foremost is concealment itself, and thus its correlative unconcealment. This is again grounded in the constitution of the being of *Dasein* as *Verfallen*: *Dasein* initially and for the most part tarrys by individual inner-worldly beings – what is unconcealed – and forgets concealment and unconcealment as such. Heidegger refers to this as the *in-sistence* belonging to *Dasein*. *Dasein* is in-sistent, however, only in so far as it is ek-sistent, a standing out into the openness of beings as such.

The in-sistence of *Dasein* (*Dasein's* being as *Verfallen*) is related, in the lecture, to what Heidegger calls *error* [*Irre*]. ‘Der Mensch irrt. Der Mensch geht nicht erst in die Irre. Er geht nur immer in der Irre, weil er ek-sistent in-sistiert und so schon in der Irre steht...die Irre gehört zur inneren Verfassung des Da-seins, in das der geschichtliche Mensch eingelassen ist.’⁶⁰ By error, Heidegger understands the essential opposite within the essence of truth: concealment. It is something that can manifest itself on as large a scale as the world-historical and on as small a scale as the simple, ordinary making of mistakes. Perhaps we can include here, most notably, the “wasting” of *time*. ‘Jedes Verhalten hat gemäß seiner Offenständigkeit und seinem Bezug zum Seienden im Ganzen je seine Weise des Irrrens. Der Irrtum erstreckt sich vom gewöhnlichsten Sich-vertun, Sich-versehen und Sich-verrechnen bis zum Sich-verlaufen und Sich-versteigen in den wesentlichen Haltungen und

⁵⁶ Der Spruch des Anaximander, *Holzwege*, p. 311

⁵⁷ For example: ‘Wahrheit als die Lichtung für die Verbergung ist...ein wesentlich anderer Entwurf als die ἀλήθεια, obzwar er gerade in die Erinnerung an diese gehört und diese zu ihm.’ [*Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 350]

⁵⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 222 Originally italicised.

⁵⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 222

Entscheidungen.’⁶¹ Accordingly, falsity of judgement is only one, and, at that, a superficial form of error. Conceived historically, of course, error, in the sense of in-sistence, takes the form of metaphysical thinking, that is, of *Seinsvergessenheit*. As the clinging only to beings and the forgetting of unconcealment itself, error is the forgetting of being. But this implies that the metaphysical conception of the essence of truth – as correctness – concerns rather precisely the *un-essence* of truth.

The interrelation of concealment and unconcealment constitutes the structurality of truth. In later works this is often captured in the formula “clearing for self-concealing”: ‘Das Wesen der Wahrheit ist die *Lichtung für das Sichverbergen*.’⁶² This structure contains within it, on the one hand, the moment of the withdrawal of being in its truth, *Seinsverlassenheit*, which grounds metaphysical thinking, and, on the other hand, the disclosure as such that is being itself as presence, as the “*Da*” of *Da-sein*: ‘Wahrheit ist also niemals nur *Lichtung*, sondern west als *Verbergung* ebenso ursprünglich und innig mit der *Lichtung*. Beide, *Lichtung* und *Verbergung*, sind nicht zwei, sondern die *Wesung* des Einen, der Wahrheit selbst.’⁶³ The structure of unconcealment and concealment is the same as the temporal structure of presence and absence. But this is no mere structural analogy. Precisely in so far as they are structurally identical, the structure of truth and the structure of time are the very same thing. Neither is more primordial than the other; neither makes the other possible. They are the same considered in different ways.

We can now see the sense in which time, for Heidegger, was always to be conceived as the truth of being. There is not first time and then being to subsequently inhabit its structures; nor is there first being and then time to “structuralise” it afterwards. Rather, being and time are the same – the basic structure, also called truth, of concealment and unconcealment. They are both “given”, or rather *ereignet*, by *Ereignis*. Thus: ‘Das Wesen der Wahrheit ist die lichtende *Verbergung* des Ereignisses.’⁶⁴ The *Ereignung* of *Ereignis* is indeed, Heidegger tells us, *Ereignis* coming to truth: ‘Das Ereignis ereignet, sagt nichts anderes als: Es und nur es *wird* Wahrheit’⁶⁵. It could possibly be said, if we are allowed to speak in this way, that concealment-unconcealment is the structure of *Ereignis* itself. It is also, of course, let it be noted, the great overarching structure – the chronological structure – of that singular happening that is Western history.

In the lecture *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* the concealment proper to the essence of truth is cleaved in two. On the one hand, concealment takes the form of *Versagen*, perhaps

⁶⁰ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 196

⁶¹ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 197

⁶² *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 348

⁶³ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 349

⁶⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 344

⁶⁵ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 349

best translated as “denial”: ‘Seiendes versagt sich uns bis auf jenes Eine und dem Anschein nach Geringste, das wir am ehesten treffen, wenn wir vom Seienden nur noch sagen können, daß es sei. Die Verbergung als Versagen ist nicht erst und nur die jedesmalige Grenze der Erkenntnis, sondern der Anfang der Lichtung des Gelichteten.’⁶⁶ On the other hand, concealment takes the form of *Verstellen*, well translated by “dissimulation”: ‘Seiendes schiebt sich vor Seiendes, das eine verschleiert das andere, jenes verdunkelt dieses, wenigstens verbaut vieles, vereinzelt verleugnet alles. Hier ist das Verbergung nicht jenes einfache Versagen, sondern: das Seiende erscheint zwar, aber es gibt sich anders, als es ist.’⁶⁷ This latter mode of concealment is the condition for our capacity to make mistakes, to get things wrong. In the language of metaphysics these could be expressed as determinations of the (eternal) finitude of knowledge.

In this lecture, as often elsewhere, the concealment proper to the essence of truth is characterised in terms of a *refusal* [*Verweigern*]. *Versagen* and *Verstellen* are the two essential forms of refusal. In the word *Verweigern* Heidegger wishes to be heard a turn away from unconcealment, understood in terms of a “strife” [*Streit*] between unconcealment and concealment. Heidegger names it the “*Urstreit*” of the essence of truth, and accords it to *Ereignis* as such.⁶⁸ The thought is that the clearing, within which beings come to presence, comes to be in the first place from out of the original strife of concealment and unconcealment. *Truth opens itself* reflexively, or, as Heidegger also puts it, *sets itself up* [*sich einrichtet*] as and within this strife. This is the *happening* (or *Ereignis*) of truth. ‘Wahrheit geschieht nur so, daß sie in dem durch sie selbst sich öffnenden Streit und Spielraum sich einrichtet. Weil die Wahrheit das Gegenwärtige von Lichtung und Verbergung ist, deshalb gehört zu ihr das, was hier die Einrichtung genannt sei.’⁶⁹ And this happening is, of course, *historical*.

There is a famous passage in *Brief über den Humanismus* in which Heidegger claims that in the lecture *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* a certain insight is given into the thinking of the *Kehre*.⁷⁰ We need not look far to identify this insight. Although we shall postpone a discussion of the so called *Kehre* attributed to Heidegger’s development for a subsequent chapter⁷¹, we can remark here that the *Kehre* is itself the turn in the essence of truth from correctness to concealment and unconcealment, as the turn that overcomes the metaphysical constellation of thinking and discloses the truth of being. Thus the lecture as a whole itself

⁶⁶ Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes, *Holzwege*, p. 42

⁶⁷ Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes, *Holzwege*, p. 42

⁶⁸ In a note added to Heidegger’s own copy of the *Reclam* edition of 1960.

⁶⁹ Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes, *Holzwege*, p. 49 I have pursued the intimate relation that Heidegger draws out between truth and *art*, grounded on this notion of the strife between concealment and unconcealment, which is intended to lead to the overcoming of traditional aesthetics, in *Heidegger and Metaphysical Aesthetics*, BSA Postgraduate Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 1, No. 1.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Brief über den Humanismus*, *Wegmarken*, pp. 327-328.

marks the turn. Heidegger puts it like this in a note added to the end of the second publication of the lecture in 1949: 'Die Antwort auf die Frage nach dem Wesen der Wahrheit ist die Sage einer Kehre innerhalb der Geschichte des Seyns.'⁷² The implication is that in *Sein und Zeit* the *Kehre* is still not yet effected, that the essence of truth is there still not thought entirely beyond the boundaries of metaphysics. In so far as truth as discoveredness, disclosure is presented in terms of, and made intelligible through, truth as correctness, the purview of the philosophy of the subject, which is to say its *language*, has still not yet been decisively abandoned. Nevertheless, in *Sein und Zeit* the first essential steps are made that prepare the ground for the *Kehre*. Indeed, as we shall see in more detail later, the turn to the third division of *Sein und Zeit*, "*Zeit und Sein*" was originally intended to effect the *Kehre* out of metaphysics. What this reversal might mean can be seen more clearly when we consider Heidegger's claim: 'Die Frage nach dem Wesen der Wahrheit findet ihre Antwort in dem Satz: *das Wesen* [being] *der Wahrheit* [time] *ist die Wahrheit* [time] *des Wesens* [being].'⁷³ "*Wesen*", Heidegger tells us, is to be understood as a verb: to *hold sway*. The metaphysical question concerning the essence of truth becomes the question concerning the truth of the holding sway, the truth of being. This is a question set apart from metaphysics, one whose perspective is the history of being, in which metaphysics, taken up into its historical essence, is overcome.

Before concluding our consideration of Heidegger's concept of truth, we shall attend to two important and related objections brought against it by, amongst others, Ernst Tugendhat. In his book *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger* Tugendhat points out, in relation to §44 of *Sein und Zeit*, that Heidegger's concept of discovering contains an essential ambiguity and that it is only on the basis of this ambiguity that he is able to draw his conclusion that the most original determination of truth is disclosure, *Erschlossenheit*. On the one hand, discovering means the simple showing of the entity itself; on the other hand, it means the showing of the entity itself *as it is, as opposed to how it is not*. Tugendhat's thought is that only the second meaning of discovering can function as a determination of truth for the first meaning allows no room for *false* discovering, that is, en-covering, and the word truth can only receive a determination at all in so far as it is essentially contrasted with falsehood. Tugendhat asks how it is, then, that one can call the first meaning of discovering – which turns out to be the concept of disclosure as such – truth at all, as, it seems, Heidegger is ~~wont~~ to do. Simply sliding from one to the other, from the second to the first, without any acknowledgement whatsoever renders Heidegger's supposed derivation of the traditional concept of truth spurious. The two objections are thus, on the one hand, that Heidegger's

⁷¹ Cf. Chapter 12.

⁷² Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 201

concept of truth allows no room for falsity, and, on the other, that it does not warrant being called truth because, as far as Heidegger has shown, it is unrelated to the traditional meaning of this term.

Can we defend Heidegger's concept of truth from these charges? As to the second point, it is not clear at all that in §44 Heidegger is moving between different concepts of discoveredness. The two different meanings which Tugendhat distinguishes are not to be conceived as referring to two different "levels" of truth; rather, they both refer simply to the *process* of dis-covering as such. It is the process of discovering that is all Heidegger is interested in in this section, and this process can only be conceived in one way. In so far as Heidegger shows that the possibility of the proposition being true is that it discovers the being itself that it refers to – no matter for the "how" of this discovering – then he is in a position to affirm that discoveredness as such, the process of coming to presence, of emergence from unconcealment, is original truth. The discovering-function of the proposition is not something that rests on the deeper layer of the disclosure that is *Da-sein*; rather, this disclosure and this dis-covering are the very same – the non-static (ecstatic) revealing operation that is the happening of unconcealment.

But can this truth as discovering support the weight of an adequate concept of falsehood? Tugendhat argues that a false proposition precisely does not discover its object – *as it is* – but rather the opposite: it covers it up: 'Die falsche Aussage verbirgt in der Tat, aber was und wie? Man wird doch wohl sagen müssen: sie verdeckt das Seiende, wie es selbst ist, und zwar dadurch, daß sie es in einem anderen Wie entdeckt, nämlich so wie es nicht selbst ist.'⁷⁴ But the employment of the qualifications "wie es selbst ist" and "wie es nicht selbst ist" entails the concession of Heidegger's point, for it means that Tugendhat accepts that the false proposition discovers the being itself just as much as the true one, and thus that propositional truth and falsity are to be understood in terms of discovering. Indeed, one can only make sense of the notion of falsity as the oppugnant opposite of truth in so far as both are conceived as unconcealing the matter itself. The proposition "the picture on the wall does *not* hang crooked" can only be false in so far as it *discovers* the picture *itself*. As Heidegger writes: 'Das Seiende ist nicht völlig verborgen, sondern gerade entdeckt, aber zugleich verstellt; es zeigt sich – aber im Modus des Scheins.'⁷⁵

Tugendhat cannot see how Heidegger's original truth, disclosure as such, can incorporate any notion of falsehood whatsoever. This is because he malforms Heidegger's concept of truth by separating it into two layers, peeling that dimension in which falsity first makes sense away from Heidegger's original determination of truth. In doing this he employs

⁷³ Vom Wesen der Wahrheit, *Wegmarken*, p. 201. Also: 'Die Frage nach dem *Wesen der Wahrheit* ist zugleich und in sich die Frage nach der *Wahrheit des Wesens*.' [*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p.47]

⁷⁴ *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*, p. 334

two different ultimately static notions of revealing. Once the layers coalesce into one again, and truth as disclosure is understood ecstatically and unitarily, the way in which falsehood belongs to original truth as disclosure becomes clear. Indeed, as we have seen, Heidegger is only too greatly at pains to emphasise the way in which untruth belongs to truth, the way in which truth and untruth *jointly* and *equally*, without hierarchy, configure the structure of disclosure, un-concealment, ἀ-λήθεια.

Lastly, to return to the question of whether Heidegger is entitled to call disclosure as such “truth”, this receives its affirmation again in reference to the *history* of truth. If it is the case that original truth metamorphosises into the traditional concept of truth through an essential deformation, as Heidegger tries to show in his essay on Plato’s doctrine of truth, then both “truths” are *truth*. We have to do with what is ultimately the *same phenomenon* here. As we have seen, the thinking concerning this structural transfiguration remains untainted by Heidegger’s supposed retraction of his essay late in life.

However, coupled together with this retraction is apparently the claim that original truth, now expressed simply “*Ἀλήθεια*”, cannot, after all, be called truth: ‘Die Frage nach der *Ἀλήθεια*, nach der Unverborgenheit als solcher, ist nicht die Frage nach der Wahrheit. Darum war es nicht sachgemäß und demzufolge irreführend, die *Ἀλήθεια* im Sinne der Lichtung Wahrheit zu nennen.’⁷⁶ Again, however, Heidegger’s ostensible recantation here serves sooner as a confirmation of his former views than as abjuration. We find this conditional on the preceeding page:

Sofern man Wahrheit im überlieferten “natürlichen” Sinn als die am Seienden ausgewiesene Übereinstimmung der Erkenntnis mit dem Seienden versteht, aber auch, sofern die Wahrheit als die Gewißheit des Wissens vom Sein ausgelegt wird, darf die *Ἀλήθεια*, die Unverborgenheit im Sinne der Lichtung, nicht mit der Wahrheit gleichgesetzt werden. Vielmehr gewährt die *Ἀλήθεια*, die Unverborgenheit als Lichtung gedacht, erst die Möglichkeit von Wahrheit. Denn die Wahrheit kann selbst ebenso wie Sein und Denken nur im Element der Lichtung das sein, was sie ist.

The structural connective between *Ἀλήθεια* and the traditional concept of truth here advocated has not shifted in any degree. Heidegger had never implied that they were the very same. The issue here is merely verbal; not philosophical at all.

⁷⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 222

⁷⁶ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 77

Part III:

The Question of Being

Chapter 10:

Inauthenticity and Metaphysics

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the way in which the structures of metaphysical thinking and the historical epoch of metaphysics in general, as regards its essential structural characteristics, are grounded in the mode of existence that Heidegger names inauthenticity. What does Heidegger mean by inauthenticity?

We have already answered this question above in the context of our discussion of selfhood. Inauthenticity is the mode of *Dasein*'s being in which *Dasein* has lost its own self and has taken on the self that Heidegger calls *das Man*. It may be wondered how *Dasein* is capable of losing its self, what "losing" in this context means. Fundamentally, the losing of its self, or the process of losing its self, is to be understood in terms of what we called a *flight* of *Dasein* from itself: the flight of *Verfallen*. The flight of *Verfallen* is the flight of *Dasein* away from its self and towards inner-worldly beings. Heidegger writes: '[*Verfallen*]...soll bedeuten: das *Dasein* ist zunächst und zumeist *bei der besorgten "Welt"*.'¹ The ground of this flight, which is a fundamental existential determination of *Dasein*, is the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*. In *Angst* the being of *Dasein* as being-in-the-world is disclosed to *Dasein*. More precisely, the being of *Dasein* is disclosed to it as given over to itself, as factual existence, as *responsible* freedom. The flight of *Dasein* from itself is the flight away from the meaning of existence, from existential responsibility as the truth of the being of *Dasein*. *Dasein* is, as it were, *lucifugous*.

Dasein flees its self towards inner-worldly beings. As a flight from itself as *Da-sein*, Heidegger also characterises inauthenticity as *Weg-sein*.² It takes the form of *Dasein* understanding its possibilities, and thus understanding itself, from the inner-worldly beings that it encounters. 'Das *Dasein* versteht sich zunächst und zumeist aus den Dingen...Das *Dasein* versteht sich aus dem Seinkönnen, das durch das Gelingen und Mißlingen, durch die

¹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 175

² Cf., for example, *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, pp. 323 ff.

Tunlichkeit und Untunlichkeit seines Umgangs mit den Dingen bestimmt ist. Das Dasein kommt so aus den Dingen her auf sich zu.’³ For this reason, Heidegger tells us, inauthentic *Dasein* is distracted [*zerstreut* – from *zerstreuen*, to disperse, scatter] by or amidst inner-worldly beings. *Dasein* does not take up possibilities grounded in the truth of its finite existence, *Dasein* does not take up its “own-most” possibilities, but rather takes up possibilities suggested to it by things and, it is important to highlight, by other “*Daseins*” together with it in the world. *Dasein* understands its possibilities out of the world that *das Man* has *already* constituted in its understanding projection. This self is not individuated because it does not take up its own-most possibilities, but instead takes up the possibilities of the “anyone”. It is thus the self of “averageness” [*Durchschnittlichkeit*] and the neutrality of “publicness” [*Öffentlichkeit*]. *Das Man* has always already made the decisions and judgements of the average publicness, and therefore inauthentic *Dasein* is ostensibly exonerated from all responsibility. ‘Weil das Man jedoch alles Urteilen und Entscheiden vorgibt, nimmt es dem jeweiligen Dasein die Verantwortlichkeit ab.’⁴

This flight of *Dasein* characterises its mode of being, Heidegger tells us, initially and for the most part, and thus inauthenticity is to be understood as identical to what we introduced at the outset of our discussion of the existential analysis as *Dasein*’s everydayness [*Alltäglichkeit*].⁵ Initially and for the most part *Dasein* is in the mode of inauthenticity because, in so far as it is always already existing in a world, it has always already understood itself out of inner-worldly beings. ‘Weil wir als Existierende im vorhinein schon Welt verstehen, können wir uns ständig in bestimmter Weise aus dem begegnenden Seienden als innerweltlichem verstehen und begegnen.’⁶ *Verfallen* is, of course, an essential structural determination of the being of *Dasein*. It is not at all to be understood as a mere proclivity of human weakness, as it so often is assumed to be by Heidegger’s commentators.⁷ ‘Das

³ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, pp. 409–410

⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 127

⁵ This thought often vexes the commentators, the majority of which see a distinction here. (For example: Zimmerman, *Eclipse of the Self*, pp. 44 ff; Blattner, *Heidegger’s Temporal Idealism*, p. 76; Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, pp. 225 ff.) However, everydayness is merely the name for the same phenomenon in the course of the first turn of the hermeneutic wheel.

⁶ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 243

⁷ Dreyfus contends that there are two senses of *Verfallen* in *Sein und Zeit*, one structural, one psychological. We can be certain, of course, that there is no psychological sense of *Verfallen* at play in *Sein und Zeit* – that would make a mockery of Heidegger’s most basic intentions. Rather, Dreyfus fails to see that the two senses he purports to distinguish are the very same – a structural sense. It is of course true that Heidegger discusses *Verfallen* *existentially*, which ultimately means in relation to *Dasein*’s essential finitude. As such it takes on a different determination as, for example, its structural temporal correlative – the present. Ecstatic-horizontal temporal structure alone cannot account for the movement of *Verfallen*, even if temporality itself is essentially finite. To make sense of it as *Dasein*’s concerned flight of *Angst* before its own finitude, before the groundlessness of its being, requires the existential foundation of *Sorge*. But an existential account is so far removed from being a psychological account as to be ultimately incompatible with one.

Verfallen enthüllt eine *wesenhafte* ontologische Struktur des Daseins selbst⁸. And it must not be forgotten that, in the last place, inauthenticity is to be understood as one of the two basic modes of temporalisation.

Inauthenticity and the Structure of Metaphysical Thinking

We saw in the course of our schematic outline of the history of being that the epoch of metaphysics is characterised by a particular way of thinking, a particular conceptuality. This thinking revolves around the categorial schema of the subject-object relation, and thus the conception of truth as correctness.⁹ This schema itself is possible only given an understanding of the being of beings (being-ness) determined primarily by the mode of being that Heidegger names *Vorhandenheit*. *Vorhandenheit* is the mode of being of those beings disclosed as removed from ecstatic structurality. How does the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit* become paradigmatic for *Dasein*'s understanding of the being of beings for reasons that lie in the constitution of *Dasein* itself?

We have seen that in the course of its dealings in the world *Dasein* encounters beings for the most part in the mode of *Zuhandenheit*. This is the mode of being that corresponds to *Dasein*'s use of inner-worldly beings for the sake of possibilities of its own being. In the course of their use, however, these inner-worldly beings themselves are not thematically disclosed to *Dasein* at all; they remain in-explicit. They only become explicitly disclosed to *Dasein* in the mode of *Dasein*'s "theoretical" comportment, in which *Dasein* engages with them more or less "cognitively". This mode of *Dasein*'s being, as we have seen, corresponds to the mode of being of inner-worldly beings of *Vorhandenheit*. Beings are thus only thematically disclosed to *Dasein* in so far as they are *vorhanden*. The mode of being in which beings are thematically disclosed will, of course, inevitably take precedence over other modes of being in the theoretical thematisation of the being of beings. Thus beings in general will come to be understood in terms of *Vorhandenheit*, and the being-ness of beings will be interpreted accordingly.

This is no less true of the being that *Dasein* itself is. The being of the being that theoretically cognises beings is itself, for the same reasons, understood in terms of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*: the "subject", standing to other beings of the mode of

⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 179. An allusion to the theological doctrine of original sin seems undeniable here. Indeed, the theological tone of many of the concepts employed by Heidegger in characterising *Dasein* is remarkable. In this, as in all other cases, Heidegger interdicts the theological interpretation: 'Das Verfallen ist ein ontologischer Bewegungsbegriff. Ontisch wird nicht entschieden, ob der Mensch "in der Sünde erstickt", im *status corruptionis* ist, ob er im *status integritatis* wandelt oder sich in einem Zwischenstadium, dem *status gratiae*, befindet.' [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 180]

⁹ 'Die *Richtigkeit* als Auslegung des Offenen wird der Grund der Subjekt-Objekt-Beziehung.' [*Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 316]

Vorhandenheit (objects) in a cognitive relation that comes to be understood in terms of *representation* [*Vorstellung*]. Correspondingly – and most importantly of all –, truth comes to be understood in terms of *Vorhandenheit* as the correctness of representation. Thus the basic categorial schema of metaphysical thinking is born. It is grounded in the thematisation of being in general in terms of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*, which is itself a fundamental possibility of the structural constitution of the being of *Dasein*. But in what sense is this metaphysical understanding of being and the categories of thought that it underlies grounded in an *inauthentic* mode of the being of *Dasein*?

We have seen that inauthenticity is precisely a flight from the essence of existence as such towards inner-worldly beings, the flight of *Verfallen*. In the mode of being of inauthenticity, therefore, existence itself, as the basic constitution of the being that is inauthentic, is precisely not brought to disclosure, but rather covered up. In inauthenticity, in the flight of *Verfallen* towards inner-worldly beings, *Dasein* conceals – and this is precisely its flight – its *existence* from itself. Now, the metaphysical subject – a being of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit* – does not *exist*, in Heidegger's sense; for him, existence constitutes only the being of *Dasein*; precisely not the being of beings of the mode of *Vorhandenheit*. The metaphysical subject is rather the upshot of *Dasein's* interpretation of its own being *in so far as its essence as existence is concealed from it*, that is, in so far as it interprets its own being according to the mode of being of the inner-worldly beings that it encounters in its flight from existence.¹⁰ If the concealment of *Dasein's* essence as existence is precisely what Heidegger means by the mode of being of inauthenticity, and if the metaphysical subject and thus the categories of metaphysical thinking in general are only possible given the concealment of existence from *Dasein* itself, then metaphysical thinking must be fundamentally grounded in the mode of being of inauthenticity.

As we have seen, the ontological constitution of existence is ecstatic temporality. Fleeing the disclosure of existence, and thus covering the phenomenon of ec-static temporality over, metaphysical thinking interprets time *statically* – as an irreversible succession of “nows”. But the interpretation of being in general in terms of *Vorhandenheit* is only possible on the basis of this static interpretation of time, since beings in the mode of *Vorhandenheit* are precisely those beings which have been plucked out of the ecstatic structures that otherwise determine the being of inner-worldly beings in so far as they are constituted as what they are in relation to a temporal projection of *Dasein* onto a possibility of its being for the sake of itself. Indeed, the *nows* themselves have the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*: ‘Die Zeit, die man als das Jetzt und als eine Mannigfaltigkeit und Abfolge

¹⁰ ‘Das alltägliche Dasein schöpft die vorontologische Auslegung seines Seins aus der nächsten Seinsart des Man. Die ontologische Interpretation folgt zunächst dieser Auslegungstendenz, sie

von Jetzt kennt, ist eine *vorhandene Folge*. Die Jetzt geben sich als innerzeitig. Sie kommen an und verschwinden wie Seiendes, sie vergehen wie Vorhandenes zum Nicht-mehr-vorhandenen.¹¹

The interpretation of being in general according to the static model of *Vorhandenheit* underlies, Heidegger tells us, all of the successive metaphysical interpretations of being-ness. Beneath the understanding of being in terms of substance, absolute position (Kant), absolute subjectivity (Hegel), the will-to-power (Nietzsche) lies the unifying metaphysical experience of being as *constant presence* [*beständige Anwesenheit*]. The interpretation of the being-ness of beings as constant presence is founded on the model of *Vorhandenheit*, for, whilst being is here indeed understood in terms of time – presence –, a *constant* presence is one bereft of ecstasy. Indeed, the nows themselves are to be grasped in terms of constant presence even though they come and go. For this reason, whilst temporality is primarily futural, the inauthentic, metaphysical understanding grasps time primarily out of the present: ‘Die ekstatisch-horizontale Zeitlichkeit zeitigt sich *primär* aus der *Zukunft*. Das vulgäre Zeitverständnis hingegen sieht das Grundphänomen der Zeit im *Jetzt...*, das man “Gegenwart” nennt.’¹²

Crucially, for the metaphysical understanding, grounded in the mode of being of *Verfallen*, time is *infinite*, whereas, as we have seen, ecstatic temporality is essentially *finite*. The supposed *infinity* of time is precisely a consequence of its interpretation as a succession of nows. Such a succession is necessarily, even as a matter of logic (although paradoxically, as Kant pointed out), endless in both “directions”. In this way the vulgar understanding conceals the existential phenomenon of *death* that is so intimately connected with the possibility of the authentic mode of *Dasein*’s being. This understanding of time as infinite is no arbitrary consequence of *Dasein*’s understanding in the mode of being of *Verfallen*; rather, it belongs to the essence of this inauthentic mode of being to precisely cover up its essential finitude, grounded in the basic phenomenon of original temporality, as the angst-ridden flight from its own death. ‘In der besorgten Flucht liegt die Flucht *vor* dem Tode, das heißt ein Wegsehen *von* dem Ende des In-der-Welt-seins. Dieses Wegsehen von... ist an ihm selbst ein Modus des ekstatisch *zukünftigen* Seins *zum* Ende. Die uneigentliche Zeitlichkeit des

versteht das Dasein aus der Welt her und findet es als innerweltlich Seiendes vor.’ [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 130]

¹¹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 385 This metaphysical interpretation of time being also, of course, grounded in *Verfallen*: ‘Die Verdeckung der spezifischen Strukturmomente der Weltzeit, die Verdeckung ihres Ursprungs aus der Zeitlichkeit und die Verdeckung dieser selbst hat ihren Grund in der Seinsart des Daseins, die wir das *Verfallen* nennen.’ [*Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 384] It is the only one possible once ecstatic temporality has been concealed.

¹² *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 426–427

verfallend-alltäglichen Daseins muß als solches Wegsehen von der Endlichkeit die eigentliche Zukünftigkeit und damit die Zeitlichkeit überhaupt verkennen.’¹³

Inauthenticity as *Seinsvergessenheit*

We saw that Heidegger characterises the epoch of the history of being of metaphysics as the epoch of *Seinsvergessenheit*: being itself is forgotten; a precedence of beings establishes itself. In so far as metaphysical thinking is grounded in the structures of *Dasein* but is to be essentially determined as *Seinsvergessenheit*, the possibility of *Seinsvergessenheit* must itself lie within the structures of *Dasein*. We saw that *Seinsvergessenheit* is grounded on something more primordial, *Seinsverlassenheit*, which is to be characterised as the withdrawal [*Entzug*] of being in its truth. Being forsakes beings.

As we saw already in the first part, the possibility of the withdrawal of being belongs to the essence, or better, the structure, of truth. Truth is to be understood in terms of the twin structural concepts of unconcealment and concealment. To this structure belongs both unconcealment *itself* and *that* which is unconcealed; that is, both *presence as such* and *that* which presences. This conformation grounds the possibility of the withdrawal of being. Being – that which grounds beings as *beings* – withdraws in favour of the beings themselves; *presence* withdraws in favour of *that* which presences. This is to say that being, presence, unconcealment *itself*, remains concealed whilst beings, that which presences, are unconcealed. ‘Das Sein selbst west als die Unverborgenheit, in der das Seiende anwest. Die Unverborgenheit selbst jedoch bleibt *als diese* verborgen...*Das Sein selbst bleibt aus.*’¹⁴ How is this to be understood?

We have seen that *Dasein* is the structural possibility of disclosure as such, that is, the structural possibility of truth as unconcealment. The fundamental structure of *Dasein* is temporality. The ecstatic-horizontal character of temporality makes presence and absence first possible; it constitutes, to use the later Heidegger’s phrase, the truth of being. To the ontological constitution of the being of *Dasein* as *Sorge* – precisely in so far as *Dasein* is a factual projection on possibilities – belongs the moment which Heidegger calls *Verfallen*. As *Verfallen*, *Dasein* is always already distrait, absorbed in a world amidst inner-worldly beings. This means that *Dasein* always first and foremost understands itself – that is, its possibilities – from out of the beings that it encounters, rather than from out of the essence of its own finite existence. Inner-worldly beings are disclosed, but being as such is concealed. The dynamic structural moment of the being of *Dasein* of *Verfallen* is that which, from the opposite direction, as it were, Heidegger calls the withdrawal of being; that which grounds the

¹³ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 424

¹⁴ *Nietzsche II*, p. 318

forgetting of being for a precedence of beings. Heidegger gives confirmation of this in the letter on humanism: 'Das Vergessen der Wahrheit des Seins zugunsten des Andrangs des im Wesen unbedachten Seienden ist der Sinn des in "S. u. Z." genannten "Verfallens".'¹⁵ *Dasein*, as the structural possibility of unconcealment as such, to whose being *Verfallen* constitutively belongs, is itself the ground of the concealment of being, the priority of the unconcealment of beings, and thus of *Seinsverlassenheit* and the *Seinsvergessenheit* grounded therein, and therefore of the epoch in the history of being essentially determined by these.¹⁶ Again: 'Der Entzug...ist des Da-seins.'¹⁷ Put another way: the structure that makes truth first possible is the ground of the primacy of what is unconcealed over unconcealment as such; and put another way again: in so far as *Verfallen* is the existential correlative of the temporal ecstasy of the present, the forgetting of being is fundamentally grounded – made possible and necessary – by the ecstatic-horizontal structure of primordial temporality.

But *Verfallen* is the essential determination of the predominant mode of *inauthenticity* of the being of *Dasein*. Thus *inauthenticity* is the ground of the possibility of *Seinsvergessenheit*.

In so far as the withdrawal of being is grounded in disclosure as such, it has always already happened as soon as beings are drawn into unconcealment. Thus as long as there has been philosophy – that is, metaphysics – has there been *Seinsverlassenheit*.

Inauthenticity and Modern Technology

At the completion of the epoch of metaphysics modern technology comes to hold sway. 'Die Technik ist der höchste und umfangreichste Triumph der abendländischen Metaphysik, sie ist diese selbst in ihrer Ausbreitung durch das Seiende im Ganzen.'¹⁸ Being the result of millennia of metaphysical thinking, technological ek-sistentiality is inseparable from metaphysical modes of thought – the interpretation of being in general in terms of *Vorhandenheit* and thus of man as the subject of knowledge. 'Denn mit der sich vollendenden Metaphysik der Subjektivität, die dem äußersten Entzug der Wahrheit des Seins

¹⁵ Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, p. 332 Cf. also this passage: 'Der Mensch ist in diesem Geschehnis des Ausbleibens des Seins selbst in die Loslassung des Seienden aus der sich entziehenden Wahrheit des Seins geworfen. Er verfällt, das Sein im Sinne des Seienden als solchen vorstellend, auf das Seiende, um aus dem Seienden her, ihm verfallende, sich selbst als den Seienden aufzurichten, der vorstellend-herstellend sich des Seienden als des Gegenständlichen bemächtigt.' [*Nietzsche II*, p. 342]

¹⁶ In so far as *Seinsverlassenheit* is to be determined as the essence of *nihilism*, it can further be pointed out that *Dasein* contains within itself the tendency towards nihilism. Nihilism is an essential structural possibility of the constitution of being of *Dasein*, and thus an essential possibility of the historical structures determined by this being.

¹⁷ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 293 Also expressed as follows: 'Das "Da" meint jene Lichtung, in der jeweils das Seiende im Ganzen steht, so freilich, daß in diesem Da das Seyn des offenen Seienden sich zeigt und zugleich entzieht.' [*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 213]

¹⁸ *Besinnung*, p. 176

entspricht, indem sie ihn bis zur Unkennbarkeit verdeckt, beginnt die Epoche der unbedingten und vollständigen Vergegenständlichung von allem, was ist.’¹⁹ And: ‘Seiendheit als Vorgestelltheit meint: Vergegenständlichung des “Wirklichen” (Wirkenden) zur Wirksamkeit. Wesentlich gehört in diese Vergegenständlichung als ihr Wahrheitswesen die Technik.’²⁰ The essence of modern technology is *Ge-stell*, according to which beings are disclosed as *Bestand*. *Ge-stell* is the *Geschick* of being which reigns at the culmination of the epoch of metaphysics as the *utmost Seinsvergessenheit*. In so far as *Seinsvergessenheit* is made possible by the inauthenticity grounded in the structural constitution of *Dasein*’s being, *Ge-stell* – and therefore the basic possibility of modern technology as such – is also to be conceived as grounded in the inauthentic mode of *Dasein*’s being.

Being is forgotten in so far as *Verfallen* essentially determines the being of *Dasein*; beings take priority in so far as *Dasein* is always already absorbed among them. Inauthenticity is the mode of the existentiality of *Dasein* correlative with this absorption – *Dasein* understands its possibilities, and thus its own self, from out of the world, from out of the inner-worldly beings among which it is absorbed. This existentiality has forgotten the truth of existence, has forgotten being as such. Modern technology – founded on the mode of the revealing of beings that is the *utmost Seinsvergessenheit*: beings revealed as *Bestand* – is to be understood correspondingly in terms of the *ek-sistentiality* of historical man to whom beings are in this way revealed. In this context, rather than speak of existentiality Heidegger often uses the word *Verhaltenheit*, comportment.

Beings revealed as *Bestand* are beings revealed purely and simply as regards their *use*, or *usability*. Beings determined by this mode of revealing, which is grounded in *Seinsvergessenheit*, and thus ultimately in *Seinsverlassenheit*, are therefore concealed as regards their being as such. The existential comportment of historical man towards beings revealed purely and simply as regards their use – an existential determination of beings – is therefore inauthentic. The existentiality of modern technology is consequently grounded primarily in the temporal ecstasy of the present (*Verfallen-sein-bei*); to the future, as to the past, it is blind. This can be seen in concrete terms, on the one hand, in the general lack of concern for sustainability in the development of modern technologies, and on the other, in the general lack of regard for the legacy of the past. The inauthentic existentiality of modern technology shows itself also in its irresoluteness²¹. The possibilities of modern technology are not in general determined by a consideration of the essence of historical mankind as such, nor by a consideration of the possibilities essential to modern technology itself as a development of historical mankind determined within a particular history (that of the West);

¹⁹ *Nietzsche II*, p. 350

²⁰ *Die Geschichte des Seyns*, p. 26

²¹ See the discussions of Heidegger’s concept of *Entschlossenheit* below.

rather, the possibilities of modern technology are in general determined by economic factors and are thus contingent on the possibilities of particular economic systems. Not grounded in the truth of being, these possibilities are in an important sense arbitrary, essentially without ultimate purpose – they are realised as a drive towards always more efficient solutions for no reason other than to procure still more efficient solutions.

Represented objects have objective extant properties that can be *measured*. Modern science develops grounded in the conception of truth as correctness – or, better, as certainty – and in the mathematical projection of nature.²² Heidegger writes: ‘Weil die neuzeitliche “Wissenschaft” (Physik) mathematisch (nicht empirisch) ist, deshalb ist sie notwendig *experimentell* im Sinne des *messenden Experimentes*... Gerade der Entwurf der Natur im *mathematischen Sinne* ist die Voraussetzung für die Notwendigkeit und Möglichkeit des “*Experimentes*” als des messenden.’²³ Modern science is essentially metaphysical, for Heidegger – grounded in *Seinsverlassenheit*. The development of modern technology and the development of the exact sciences are, as we noted above, *reciprocally* and intrinsically interrelated. Modern technology – as a mode of the *manipulation* of beings grounded on their mathematical interpretation and scientific investigation – is first made possible by the basic mathematico-scientific structures of metaphysical thinking.

Grounded on an interpretation of being as *Vorhandenheit*, which forms the core of the conceptuality of metaphysics and out of which both mathematics and modern science stem, technology, in its modern manifestations and essence, is the expression of an inauthentic existentiality.

²² ‘[D]as Mathematische – das Gewißsein – kennzeichnet die Grundart des Seins als der Vorstelltheit.’ [*Metaphysik und Nihilismus*, p. 156]

²³ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 163 On the being-historical determination of modern science cf. *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, §§73-80. We shall however omit detailed discussion of this important issue and the way in which it relates to modern technology and metaphysical thinking more generally.

Chapter 11:

Authenticity and the Truth of Being

The aim of this chapter is twofold. In the first place the essential connection between the mode of the being of *Dasein* of authenticity and the disclosure of the truth of being must be drawn. It must then be shown, in the second place, how the temporal-existential structures of *Dasein* demand of *Dasein* the mode of being of authenticity. Once these two aims have been accomplished we will be finally in a position to fully understand the relationship between the existentiality of *Dasein* and the history of being. We will consequently be in a position to fully understand three further elements of Heidegger's thought: firstly, what Heidegger means by the *Not* [need] of *Seinsverlassenheit*; secondly, why Heidegger thinks modern technology to be a danger and what this danger amounts to (as we have seen, this danger is not at all grounded in the destructive capacities of modern technology); and thirdly, and most importantly, we will be in a position to fully understand the motivation for raising the question of being and thus the fundamental (philosophical) motivation of Heidegger's entire philosophical enterprise.

Authenticity

Heidegger's word is *Eigentlichkeit*. What is meant by it? It is important to understand it in immediate connection to three further concepts of the existential analysis: *Selbstheit*, *Verlorenheit* and *Jemeinigkeit*. As we have seen, the being of *Dasein* is essentially characterised by *Selbstheit*: 'Selbstheit entspringt als Wesung des Da-seins aus dem Ursprung des Da-seins'¹ We have also seen that 'der Ursprung des Selbst ist das *Eigen-tum*'² This means, on the one hand, that *Dasein* can lose its self (*Verlorenheit*, inauthenticity), and, on the other, that *Dasein*'s existentiality is essentially characterised by *mine-ness*, *Jemeinigkeit* ["always my own", "in each case mine"]. In the mode of being of authenticity, *Dasein*'s self

¹ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 319

is its own, *Dasein* owns its self – in so far as it has *found* itself. Self-owning (as finding-one's-self) is the meaning of Heidegger's expression *Eigentlichkeit*, deriving etymologically, of course, from *eigen*. '[Das Dasein ist] seinem Wesen nach mögliches *eigentliches*, das heißt sich zueigen... Die beiden Seinsmodi der *Eigentlichkeit* und *Uneigentlichkeit*... gründen darin, daß Dasein überhaupt durch Jemeinigkeit bestimmt ist.'³

It is very important to emphasise that *Dasein*'s ontological constitution as *Sorge* is *essentially* determined by *Verfallen*. It cannot be the case then that the mode of being of authenticity is an essential *alternative* to *Verfallen*; rather, it amounts to only a particular modification of the *Verfallen* that characterises the being of *Dasein* initially and for the most part (everydayness). Heidegger writes: 'die eigentliche Existenz [ist] nichts, was über der verfallenden Alltäglichkeit schwebt, sondern existenzial nur ein modifiziertes Ergreifen dieser.'⁴ And: 'die Uneigentlichkeit gehört zum Wesen des faktischen Daseins. Eigentlichkeit ist nur eine Modifikation and keine totale Ausstreichung der Uneigentlichkeit.'⁵

Resoluteness

The mode of being of authenticity is essentially determined and primarily characterised by what Heidegger calls *Entschlossenheit* [resoluteness]. *Dasein*, existing as its self, is resolute. The term resoluteness here is in the first place to be taken in the vernacular. It describes the *Dasein* that is determined, single-minded, tenacious in relation to its projection onto the particular factual possibility. Such tenacity is possible, Heidegger is suggesting, only in so far as *Dasein* is in possession of its self, has found its self, and thus is capable for the first time of purposefully directing its self by projecting its self onto the possibilities of being that concern it, as an individual, most of all.

First and foremost, Heidegger characterises resoluteness as a mode of *disclosure*: 'Die Entschlossenheit ist ein ausgezeichneter Modus der Erschlossenheit des Daseins.'⁶ It is the authentic mode of disclosure, and thus: 'Nunmehr ist mit der Entschlossenheit die ursprünglichste, weil *eigentliche* Wahrheit des Daseins gewonnen.'⁷ In the disclosure of resoluteness the whole disclosure of being-in-the-world is modified – although not of course as regards its "content". That is not to say that *Dasein* is removed from, taken out of the world; rather, as resolute, *Dasein* first is in-the-world authentically. 'Die Entschlossenheit

² *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, pp. 319-320

³ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 42-43

⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 179

⁵ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 243

⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 297

⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 297

löst als *eigentliches Selbstsein* das Dasein nicht von seiner Welt ab, isoliert es nicht auf ein freischwebendes Ich. Wie sollte sie das auch – wo sie doch als eigentliche Erschlossenheit nichts anderes als das *In-der-Welt-sein eigentlich* ist.’⁸

The particular possibility onto which resolute *Dasein* projects is, of course, for the existential analysis, indeterminable. It is only disclosed, claims Heidegger, within the resolute projection itself. ‘Entschlossenheit “existiert” nur als verstehend-sich-entwerfender Entschluß. Aber woraufhin entschließt sich das Dasein in der Entschlossenheit? Wozu soll es sich entschließen? Die Antwort vermag *nur* der Entschluß selbst zu geben.’⁹ Resoluteness itself, of course, is precisely determined; it is determined out of its disclosure of what Heidegger calls the *Situation*. ‘Die Situation ist das je in der Entschlossenheit erschlossene Da, als welches das existierende Seiende da ist.’¹⁰ The *Situation*, as a mode of the presence of beings, is grounded on the particular ecstatic present that belongs to the temporality of authenticity – *der Augenblick*: ‘Der Augenblick ist ein *Gegenwärtigen* von Anwesendem, das zum Entschluß gehörig die Situation erschließt, in die hinein die Entschlossenheit sich entschlossen hat.’¹¹

It is important to remember that in so far as *Verfallen* is an essential moment of the structure of *Sorge*, the existential projection of resoluteness, resting as it does on the mode of being of authenticity, is merely an exceptional variation of the irresoluteness that characterises the predominant mode of being of inauthenticity. ‘Die Entschlossenheit bedeutet Sich-aufrufenlassen aus der Verlorenheit in das Man. Die Unentschlossenheit des Man bleibt gleichwohl in Herrschaft, nur vermag sie die entschlossene Existenz nicht anzufechten.’¹²

Now, Heidegger claims that the authenticity of this mode of being is *testified* to [*bezeugt*] by the existential constitution of *Dasein* itself. This is to say that *Dasein* itself *calls* [*ruff*] itself to, demands [*fordert*] of itself, an authentic mode of being.

Conscience

The existential call to authenticity, claims Heidegger, is that phenomenon named by the vulgar understanding “conscience”. Initially and for the most part *Dasein* is lost in the self of *das Man*. Becoming authentic, he tells us, is accompanied by a clearing away of the concealings and obscurings of this inauthentic mode of being.¹³ The call of conscience

⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 298

⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 298

¹⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 299

¹¹ *Die Grundprobleme der Phänomenologie*, p. 407

¹² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 299

¹³ ‘Wenn das Dasein die Welt eigens entdeckt und sich nahebringt, wenn es ihm selbst sein eigentliches Sein erschließt, dann vollzieht sich dieses Entdecken von “Welt” und Erschließen von Dasein immer

performs the function of initiating this clearing away by, in the first place, testifying to the possibility of the authentic mode of the existentiality of *Dasein*. Accordingly, the analysis of the phenomenon of conscience that Heidegger presents is an existential one, as differentiated from a psychological or a theological one. Conscience, for Heidegger, does not have the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*, it is not a capacity or faculty of the soul or of the will, for example; rather, it is an existential, an existential structure of *Dasein*.¹⁴

Heidegger claims that conscience has to do with the understanding of something and is therefore to be conceived in terms of the disclosure of *Dasein*. Disclosure is constituted by understanding and *Befindlichkeit*, as we have seen, but also by speech [*Rede*] and *Verfallen*. Conscience is phenomenally concrete as a *call*, and therefore is, according to Heidegger, as a mode of speech, fundamentally disclosive. Conscience calls into *Dasein's* lostness in *das Man* disclosing the possibility of the authenticity of being its self.

Thus that which is called *to* is *Dasein* in so far as it is lost. This is ontologically possible in so far as it belongs essentially to the being of *Dasein* that it always already has disclosed itself, always already, however unthematically, and however inauthentically, understood itself. 'Der Ruf trifft das Dasein in diesem alltäglich-durchschnittlich besorgenden Sich-immer-schon-verstehen. Das Man-selbst des besorgenden Mitseins mit Anderen wird vom Ruf getroffen.'¹⁵ And *Dasein* is called *to* its own self. 'Auf das Selbst wird das Man-selbst angerufen.'¹⁶ That which calls the call of conscience is also of course *Dasein* itself. 'Das Dasein ruft im Gewissen sich selbst.'¹⁷ Thus: *Conscience, Dasein itself, demands of Dasein the mode of being of authenticity* – it does not *merely* testify to the possibility of this mode of being –; but not at all, or at least not necessarily, intentionally. Usually, indeed, precisely the reverse is the case: conscience calls against the "will". *The call of conscience is rather grounded structurally in the existential conformation of Dasein*. In what sense?

Dasein is a *factical existence*, as we have seen. As factical it is characterised by what Heidegger calls *Geworfenheit*. *Dasein* is thrown into its that-it-is, and in such a way that it is responsible for it in having to be it. The *Geworfenheit* of *Dasein* and its correlative responsibility is always in some way disclosed to *Dasein*, but not initially and for the most part expressly. For the most part *Dasein* rather flees the explicit uncanny disclosure of its factical existence into the familiarity of *das Man*. In the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*,

als Wegräumen der Verdeckungen und Verdunkelungen, als Zerbrechen der Verstellungen, mit denen sich das Dasein gegen es selbst abgeriegelt.' [*Sein und Zeit*, p. 129]

¹⁴ As with the other existentials, the vulgar understanding of conscience is subordinated to the phenomenological ontological-existential interpretation that Heidegger himself gives and subsequently grounded in it as the understanding of conscience appropriate to the predominant inauthenticity of *Dasein*.

¹⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 272

¹⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 273

however, *Dasein's* factual existence, its “*daß es ist und als das Seiende, das es ist, seinkönnend zu sein hat*” is expressly disclosed. It is from out of the uncanny angst-ridden nakedness of its that-it-is-and-has-to-be, from out of the disclosure of its ontological structure as factual existence, that *Dasein* calls the call of conscience, calling itself out of its lostness in *das Man*. It is in this sense that the call is grounded structurally.

For this reason Heidegger determines conscience as the call of *Sorge*:

*Das Gewissen offenbart sich als Ruf der Sorge: der Rufer ist das Dasein, sich ängstigend in der Geworfenheit (Schon-sein-in...) um sein Sein-können. Der Angerufene ist eben dieses Dasein, aufgerufen zu seinem eigensten Seinkönnen (Sich-vorweg). Und aufgerufen ist das Dasein durch den Anruf aus dem Verfallen in das Man (Schon-sein-bei der besorgten Welt). Der Ruf des Gewissens, das heißt dieses selbst, hat seine ontologische Möglichkeit darin, daß das Dasein im Grunde seines Seins Sorge ist.*¹⁸

The call itself consists of no discourse. The call of conscience calls nothing. ‘Der Ruf sagt nichts aus, gibt keine Auskunft über Weltereignisse, hat nichts zu erzählen.’¹⁹ Rather, the call is silent: ‘Das Gewissen redet einzig und ständig im Modus des Schweigens.’²⁰ This does not make the call indeterminate; what the call discloses is clear and distinct, although particular existentiell possibilities are not for conscience or the existential analysis to specify. The call silently discloses the uncanny individualisation of the factual existence of *Dasein*. In spite of its silence, however, what is decisive, Heidegger insists, is the particular way in which the call is *heard*.—²¹

Now conscience is traditionally thought to be associated with *guilt*. Heidegger’s analysis confirms this association but turns it upside down. Rather than conscience being the call to innocence, conscience becomes the call to authentic *being guilty*. *Dasein* is guilty in the grounds of its being, claims Heidegger. ‘Das Dasein ist als solches schuldig’²². It is guilty in so far as it is always responsible for the *non-being*, i. e. for the *nothingness* of projects and possibilities that it has *not* chosen, and in so far as it is *not* responsible for its own factual existence. *Verfallen* is precisely a flight from this ontological being-guilty of *Dasein*, and thus the call of conscience, as the call out of the being of *das Man*, is the call to authentic being-guilty. The call precisely *discloses* this original ontological guilt. ‘Der

¹⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 275 Originally italicised.

¹⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 277-278

¹⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 273

²⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 273 Originally italicised.

²¹ As Rosen points out (p. 96, *The Question of Being*), thinking in general, for the later Heidegger, is understood on the model of hearing, in contrast to the metaphysical model of thinking as seeing (visible presence).

²² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 285 Originally italicised.

vorrufende Rückruf des Gewissens gibt dem Dasein zu verstehen, daß es...aus der Verlorenheit in das Man sich zu ihm selbst zurückholen soll, das heißt *schuldig* ist.²³

The proper *hearing* of the call of conscience is its understanding. Such understanding is *chosen*. Heidegger writes: 'Im Anruf...wird das Man-selbst auf das eigenste Schuldigsein des Selbst angerufen. Das Rufverstehen ist das Wählen – nicht des Gewissens, das als solches nicht gewählt werden kann. Gewählt wird das Gewissen-*haben* als Freisein für das eigenste Schuldigsein. *Anrufverstehen* besagt: *Gewissen-haben-wollen*.'²⁴

'Gewissen-haben-wollen ist als Sich-verstehen im eigensten Seinkönnen eine Weise der *Erschlossenheit* des Daseins'²⁵, writes Heidegger again. The mode of *Befindlichkeit* that corresponds to this disclosure is, as we have seen, the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*; the mode of speech that corresponds to this disclosure is – corresponding to the call itself – silence; and the mode of understanding that corresponds to this disclosure is of course *Dasein's* existential projection onto its being-guilty. Thus Heidegger can conclude:

Die im Gewissen-haben-wollen liegende Erschlossenheit des Daseins wird demnach konstituiert durch die Befindlichkeit der Angst, durch das Verstehen als Sichentwerfen auf das eigenste Schuldigsein und durch die Rede als Verschwiegenheit. Diese ausgezeichnete, im Dasein selbst durch sein Gewissen bezeugte eigentliche Erschlossenheit – *das verschwiegene, angstbereite Sichentwerfen auf das eigenste Schuldigsein* – nennen wir die *Entschlossenheit*.²⁶

As we noted above then: resoluteness is a mode of disclosure, namely, that mode of disclosure in which the truth of the existence of *Dasein* is disclosed. It is, we now see, precisely that mode of disclosure *demand*ed by the call of conscience. And this call of conscience is itself grounded structurally in those structures that constitute the being of *Dasein*, the *possibility* of disclosure.

Death

If resoluteness is the authenticity of the being of *Dasein* then it must stand in some sort of fundamental connection with what we characterised earlier as the authentic being towards death [*Vorlaufen zum Tode*] of *Dasein* as the temporal totality of its being. Heidegger claims that resoluteness itself *tends* to being towards death. How is this so?

As we have seen, *Dasein* is guilty in the very grounds of its being, that is, whether it has concealed it or not, *Dasein* is always already guilty. Resoluteness is precisely the explicit

²³ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 287

²⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 288

²⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 295

²⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 296-297

projection upon this ontological being-guilty, and therefore the projection onto a constant being-guilty. Projection onto a constant being-guilty already contains the notion of an “until the end” of *Dasein* and thus already the indication of the phenomenon of death:

Im eigenen Sinne der Entschlossenheit liegt es, sich auf dieses Schuldigsein zu entwerfen, als welches das *Dasein* ist, *solange es ist*. Die existenzielle Übernahme dieser “Schuld” in der Entschlossenheit wird demnach nur dann eigentlich vollzogen, wenn sich die Entschlossenheit in ihrem Erschließen des *Daseins* so durchsichtig geworden ist, daß sie das Schuldigsein *als ständiges* versteht. Dieses Verstehen aber ermöglicht sich nur dergestalt, daß sich das *Dasein* das Seinkönnen “bis zu seinem Ende” erschließt. Das Zu-Ende-*sein* des *Daseins* besagt jedoch existenzial: Sein *zum* Ende. Die Entschlossenheit wird eigentlich das, was sie sein kann, *als verstehendes Sein zum Ende*, d. h. als Vorlaufen in den Tod.²⁷

Thus: ‘[Die Entschlossenheit] birgt das eigentliche Sein zum Tode in sich als die mögliche existenzielle Modalität ihrer eigenen Eigentlichkeit.’²⁸

Heidegger presents two further considerations to phenomenally demonstrate this connection. The first is as follows. Being-guilty characterises existence. It is not then some property of something of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*; it is rather a possibility of being, albeit one that determines every specific factual projection. *Dasein* can, however, in authenticity, project itself onto this possibility of being, or, in inauthenticity, not do so. Projection in the mode of being of authenticity is, as we have already seen, determined by the projection onto the utmost possibility of *Dasein*’s death. Thus resoluteness, as the projection on being-guilty, is to be “qualified” as being towards death.

The second is as follows. Being-guilty is, for Heidegger, to be characterised in terms of non-being. But the possibility of death is the possibility of the non-being of *Dasein* pure and simple. Thus only as being towards this possibility is the non-being that determines being-guilty revealed for what it is. ‘Die das Sein des *Daseins* ursprünglich durchherrschende Nichtigkeit [ontological being-guilty] enthüllt sich ihm selbst im eigentlichen Sein zum Tode.’²⁹ As the projection upon being-guilty, resoluteness therefore stands in connection to being towards death.

As final confirmation of this, Heidegger demonstrates the connection between resoluteness and the various structural moments of being towards death. We saw that death is “*die eigenste, unbezügliche, unüberholbare Möglichkeit*” which is *certain* but nevertheless *indeterminate*. Understanding the call of conscience hauls *Dasein* back out of its lostness in *das Man* to its own-most [*eigenste*] possibility of being its self. It also precisely individuates

²⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 305

²⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 305 Originally italicised.

²⁹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 306

Dasein to its non-relational [*unbezügliche*] possibility of being. In so far as being-guilty ontologically determines the being of *Dasein*, projection upon it reveals that it is not by-passable [*unüberholbar*].

We have seen that resoluteness is to be considered as the truth of existence. Belonging to this truth there is a corresponding certainty. Heidegger writes: 'Die ursprüngliche Wahrheit der Existenz verlangt ein gleichursprüngliches Gewißsein als Sich-halten in dem, was die Entschlossenheit erschließt.'³⁰ This is the being certain of one's existentiell projection onto possibilities in what Heidegger describes as the *Situation*. This is precisely to not allow the falling back into the lostness of *das Man*. Finally, the basic indeterminacy of the resolute existentiell projection of *Dasein* is fully revealed, so Heidegger tells us, only in being towards death. 'Die *Unbestimmtheit* des eigenen, obzwar im Entschluß je gewiß gewordenen Seinkönnens offenbart sich aber erst ganz im Sein zum Tode.'³¹ We saw that the indeterminacy of death is disclosed in the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*. *Angst* is at the same time precisely the *Befindlichkeit* that determines the disclosure of *Entschlossenheit*. In *Angst* the ontological guilt of *Dasein's* being, its being fundamentally determined by nothingness, is revealed, just as is revealed the nothingness of the utmost possibility of *Dasein's* death.

Thus Heidegger concludes:

Die Analyse enthüllte der Reihe nach die aus dem eigentlichen Sein zum Tode als der eigensten, unbezüglichen unüberholbaren, gewissen und dennoch unbestimmten Möglichkeit erwachsenden *Momente* der *Modalisierung*, darauf die Entschlossenheit aus ihr selbst tendiert. Sie ist eigentlich und ganz, was sie sein kann, nur als *vorlaufende Entschlossenheit*.³²

Clearly being towards death first reaches its full determinacy also through its being brought into connection with resoluteness, and thus the authentic "*Ganzseinkönnen*" of *Dasein* is only now first fully characterised. We introduced this earlier as a methodological issue. At this point, in contrast, Heidegger tells us that 'Die Frage nach dem Ganzseinkönnen ist eine faktisch-existenzielle. Das *Dasein* beantwortet sie als entschlossenes.'³³ It is thus the basic question of the existenziell meaning of the totality of the existence of *Dasein*; and only therefore does it receive its methodological significance.

³⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 307

³¹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 308

³² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 309

³³ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 309 Originally italicised.

Authenticity and the History of Being

We have seen how the epoch of metaphysics, the only identifiable epoch of the history of being, is rooted in the inauthenticity of *Dasein*. The epoch of metaphysics is that of a historically embedded inauthenticity. We have seen how the end of this epoch is prepared by the raising of the question of being, and thus by the explicit drawing of being in its truth to unconcealment. This is the preparation of the turn [*Kehre*], salvation from danger, that event which ends the history of being, in which man enters into an essential relationship to the truth of being and thereby into his essence in so far as he becomes the guardian, the custodian [*Hüter, Wächter*], even the shepherd of being. But this essential relationship to the truth of being is precisely the authenticity of *Dasein*.—

That it is the essence of man to be the shepherd of being is grounded in the ontological constitution of *Dasein* as *Sorge*. ‘Der Mensch ist der Hirt des Seins. Darauf allein denkt “Sein und Zeit” hinaus, wenn die ekstatische Existenz als “die Sorge” erfahren ist.’³⁴ And: ‘die “Sorge” – die Wächterschaft der Not des Seyns.’³⁵ For, *Dasein* exists for the sake of its being – it exists as care for being. “‘Umwillen seiner”, d. h. rein als Wahrung und Wächterschaft des Seins’.³⁶

The essential relationship to the truth of being is grounded in the disclosure of being as such. As we have seen, for Heidegger, the mode of being of authenticity is characterised by the mode of disclosure of resoluteness. Resoluteness is that mode of disclosure in which being as such – in the sense of existence – is disclosed in its essence. This can be made fully clear by three considerations:

Firstly, conscience calls *Dasein* to its being-guilty, that is, to its self as responsible for its self, its existence, in having to be it. *Dasein* is called to authenticity. In calling *Dasein* to authenticity, the call of conscience precisely discloses the essence of the existence of *Dasein* as delivered over to itself, it discloses the truth about *Dasein*’s existence. Secondly, the disclosure of the call of conscience is characterised, so Heidegger tells us, by the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*. As we saw previously, however, the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* discloses the existence of *Dasein* in its responsibility for itself, its “*daß es ist und als das Seiende, das es ist, seinkönnend zu sein hat*”, that is, the existence of *Dasein* in its truth. Thirdly, resoluteness has by its own essence a tendency to being towards death, that is, is only authentically itself what it is in so far as it is resolute being towards death. The possibility of death, however, disclosed by the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, is precisely that possibility in which is disclosed *Dasein*’s existence in its authenticity; that is, as “*die eigenste, unbezügliche, unüberholbare Möglichkeit*”, in the possibility of death is disclosed the ontological character

³⁴ Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, p. 331

³⁵ *Besinnung*, p. 100

³⁶ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 302

of *Dasein*'s being, albeit non-conceptually. As Heidegger insists in *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, the possibility of death apophatically grounds the disclosure of the truth of being. Resoluteness, then, is that mode of disclosure in which the truth of being as such is disclosed.

The mode of being of authenticity, characterised by the mode of disclosure of resoluteness, is therefore a disclosive relationship to the truth of being. In so far as it is *demand*ed by the existential structures that ground its possibility, it is also an *essential* relationship to the truth of being, that is, one which properly accords with the essence of *Dasein*. This is what we mean when we say that authenticity constitutes the *essentiality* of *Dasein*'s existence. *Dasein* only exists in its essence in so far as it is authentic, that is, in so far as it has disclosed being in its truth.

The claim that the authenticity of *Dasein* is to be conceived as the essential relationship to the truth of being and the claim that this mode of being is structurally demanded by the being of *Dasein* itself complete the chart of the grounds that underlie the thought which has guided us throughout our exposition of Heidegger's philosophy: that the history of being is grounded in the structures unearthed by the existential analysis of *Dasein*. As the possibility of disclosure as such, the structures of *Dasein* are the possibility of man's standing in the truth of being. These structures are *temporal* structures. As such, they are wholly determinative of the *history* of man's standing in the truth of being, that is, of the history of being.

Dasein is structured by two distinct temporalities, or existentialities: that of inauthenticity and that of authenticity. As the prevailing mode of temporality, inauthenticity determines the single epoch of the history of being, that of metaphysics. The mode of temporality of authenticity, which, for essential reasons, is the exceptional mode of existentiality, is the mode of being in which *Dasein* exists according to its essence; that is, in an essential relation to the truth of being. Thus this mode of temporality determines the history of being beyond the epoch of metaphysics, where historical mankind, existing according to his essence, stands in an essential relation to the truth of being.³⁷ But it is also that mode of temporality *demand*ed by the very structures of *Dasein* itself. Thus this new beginning of the history of being is itself demanded of historical mankind by the very structures that make his history first possible. Mankind existing according to his essence in an essential relationship to the truth of being constitutes the only being-historical alternative to the inauthenticity of metaphysical thinking, and therefore effectively constitutes the end of the history of being. Determined according to the structures of *Dasein*, the history of being can only consist of two possible beginnings, perhaps two possible periods; in any case, one

³⁷ We cannot understand this new beginning as of a new *epoch*, for in it being does not any longer withhold itself in its truth.

possible epoch. It cannot consist of an indefinite succession of essentially disparate epochs or periods.

The other beginning of the history of being is that which Heidegger intends to prepare by raising the question of being, that is, by raising being as such to its truth. In this other beginning being as such in its truth – and in its history – is disclosed to historical mankind. Thus the real significance of the raising of the question of being is clear: the raising of the question of being is the attempt to respond to the demand of the structure of the truth of being, and thus of history itself, to historically inaugurate the other beginning into the new and final authentic period of the history of being and thereby overcome the historically embedded inauthenticity of metaphysics.³⁸

Upon this basis the full significance of other key concepts of the philosophy of the history of being also becomes clear. What we introduced under the name of the *Kehre* is now to be understood as the turn out of the inauthenticity of the epoch of metaphysics into the authenticity of a new beginning characterised by the essential relationship of man and being. We can now see why that which Heidegger calls *Seinsverlassenheit* grounds a *need* [*Not*]. This need is the need of an essential relation of man and being, of man existing in his essence, of authenticity, taken in a historical context. It is the need of being itself, affirms Heidegger, the need of being's *Unterkunft* [dwelling place] amidst mankind, the need of being's

³⁸ This account of the question of being contrasts, to take just one example, with the influential one of Dreyfus. For Dreyfus, the question of being amounts to the attempt 'to make sense of our ability to make sense of things' [*Being-in-the-World*, p. 10], where being is understood as 'the intelligibility correlative with our everyday background practices.' In the first place "being" for Heidegger never means simply "intelligibility". On the one hand, that would import a metaphysical subject, *for which* it was intelligible – intelligibility presumably requiring intelligence. But being, for Heidegger, – presence – is never presence *to...*; rather, it is presence as such. On the other hand, Dreyfus' account distorts the purpose of the first division of *Sein und Zeit*. The existential analyses contained therein are not intended simply to lay bare the socially shared background in which *Dasein* is ontologically enmeshed, they do not propound a pragmatist philosophy, but rather they are intended first and foremost to unearth the projective structure constitutive of disclosure in order to lay the ground for its subsequent *temporal* determination.

Herman Philipse [in *Heidegger's Philosophy of Being*] objects to Dreyfus' interpretation of the question of being as "unitarian". He claims that 'there is no unique substantial meaning of the question of being' [p. 75] and proposes in contrast what he calls a 'pluralist or penta-fold' account, according to which the question of being comprises five fundamental themes or "leitmotifs" that are 'multifariously interwoven in Heidegger's texts' [p. 211], although he admits that a common formal structure defines each of the five. This admission ends up somewhat undermining his initial hypothesis, for from this formal structure a unique and substantial meaning of the question of being can indeed be derived; namely, the one we have proposed: the question of being is the raising of being to its truth as the returning of mankind to his essence. This may be no *semantically* substantial question, for it is, after all, in the traditional sense, no *question* at all (and this is where Philipse stumbles). But for Heidegger, it must be remembered: 'das Fragen ist die Frommigkeit des Denkens' [*Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 36]. Philipse's approach to interpreting Heidegger fails, not because the fundamental themes that he picks out are not identifiably present in Heidegger's thinking (although he seems to confuse methodologies with the contentful philosophical thinking premised on them), but because these themes themselves point to a greater unity in Heidegger's thinking in accordance with which it can be understood as a whole. On the other hand, his approach inexorably askews his understanding of certain elements of Heidegger's thinking, including the *Kehre*.

needfulness of mankind in order that it come to presence at all. It is made possible by the structure of truth – just as, as we have seen, *Seinsverlassenheit* is made possible by this structure – and thus by the structures of *Dasein*. Historical mankind is in need precisely in so far as he exists outside his essence, that is, in so far as he has not disclosed being in its truth. The need of *Seinsverlassenheit* is the need of inauthenticity, the need for *Dasein* to exist in an essential, that is, authentic, relation to the truth of being.

But: 'Im Äußersten wird die Not des Seins zur Not der Notlosigkeit.'³⁹ In so far as the truth of being remains concealed, the need of being is also concealed and this concealment is never experienced as a need. 'Innerhalb der Unverborgenheit des Seienden als solchen, als welche die Geschichte der Metaphysik das Grundgeschehen bestimmt, kommt die Not des Seins nicht zum Vorschein. Das Seiende *ist* und erweckt den Anschein, als sei das Sein ohne die Not.'⁴⁰ Needlessness holds sway, and the need itself becomes the need for the experience of the need. This experience is that which Heidegger's texts themselves try to awaken in attempting to think the self-withdrawal of being that grounds the need. He writes: 'Der Not der Notlosigkeit entsprechen, kann nur heißen: vor allem anderen erst einmal zur Erfahrung der Notlosigkeit als der wesenden Not selbst verhelfen. Dazu ist notwendig, in das Not-lose der Not zu weisen, was verlangt: das Auslassen des Ausbleibens des Seins selbst erfahren.'⁴¹

We can also now fully understand why, corresponding to this need, modern technology constitutes a *danger*, according to Heidegger; a danger that has nothing to do with any of technology's destructive capabilities. The danger of modern technology consists simply in the fact that the mode of the revealing of beings that forms the essence of modern technology (*Ge-stell*) is the utmost concealment of the truth of being, for as such it is the greatest threat to the disclosure of being in its truth, that is, the greatest threat to the possibility of historical mankind existing according to his essence in essential disclosive relationship to the truth of being. The danger is thus ultimately, writes Heidegger, the danger of the *annihilation* [*Vernichtung*] of mankind's essence.

It is the greatest threat to the inauguration of the ~~other~~^{other} beginning of the history of being. It is all the more threatening in so far as it precisely conceals its nature as a threat (as the essential tendency towards the concealment of concealment that is grounded in the structure of *Dasein*). But precisely as this utmost and essential danger, it sounds what Heidegger calls an *Anklang*, an echo, of being itself. It itself grounds the thinking of *Ereignis*, of the essential sway of being, the thinking [*Besinnung*] which is to prepare the ~~other~~^{other}

³⁹ *Nietzsche II*, p. 355

⁴⁰ *Nietzsche II*, p. 354

beginning. The danger itself cultivates salvation.

⁴¹ *Nietzsche II*, pp. 355-356

Chapter 12:

The Unity of Heidegger's Project

We have attempted to demonstrate the way in which the structures of the history of being are grounded in the homologous existential structures of *Dasein*. *Dasein*, it is to be remembered, is the structural possibility of disclosure as such and therefore that which makes history first possible. We showed how the two phases of the history of being are grounded in the two basic modes of the being of *Dasein*, inauthenticity and authenticity. We are not at all reading into Heidegger's philosophy something that is not expressly there already. Here he makes explicitly the connections we have advocated in the last two chapters:

Die *Eigentlichkeit* ist trotz alles vordergründlichen *moralischen* Anscheins und gemäß dem einzigen Fragen in "Sein und Zeit" nach der Wahrheit des Seins ausschließlich und je zuvor auf diese hin zu begreifen als "Weise", das "Da" zu sein, in der sich die Er-eignung des Menschen in die Zugehörigkeit zum Sein und seiner Lichtung ("Zeit") ereignet.

"Eigentlichkeit" ist eine die Metaphysik als solche überwindende Bestimmung, entsprechend der *Un-eigentlichkeit*, die "existenzial" auf die Seinsfrage hin und aus ihr her gedacht die Verlorenheit an das *Seiende* meint, d. h. die Vormacht des Seienden selbst und seiner Überschattung des Seins, so zwar, daß die Not der Frage nach der Wahrheit des Seins ausbleiben muß.¹

And again:

Das Wort [*Verfallen*] meint nicht einen "moralphilosophisch" verstandenen und zugleich säkularisierten Sündenfall des Menschen, sondern nennt ein wesenhaftes Verhältnis des Menschen zum Sein innerhalb des Bezugs des Sein zum Menschenwesen. Demgemäß bedeuten die Präludierend gebrauchten Titel "Eigentlichkeit" und "Uneigentlichkeit" nicht einen moralisch-existenziellen, nicht

¹ *Besinnung*, p. 145

einen “anthropologischen” Unterschied, sondern den allererst einmal zu denkenden weil der Philosophie bisher verborgenen, “ekstatischen” Bezug des Menschenwesens zur Wahrheit des Seins.²

In so far as these connections hold, the relation between the earlier existential analysis and the later philosophy of the history of being must be characterised as one of *grounding*: the philosophy of the history of being is grounded in the existential analysis. This means: the existential analysis determines the necessary conceptual horizon for the philosophy of the history of being, it opens and delimits that conceptual domain in which the philosophy of the history of being must be unfolded, thereby first making it possible. This implies, in the first place, that the philosophy of the history of being cannot stand independently of its foundation in the existential analysis and be at the same time fully understood. It implies, in the second place, that Heidegger did not at all renounce or dispense with the existential analysis as he developed the philosophy of the history of being. The existential analysis remains integral to the conceptuality of the history of being. It implies, in the third place, that the existential analysis cannot be fully understood without an appreciation of the philosophy of the history of being. The existential analysis was never intended to be a finished philosophy standing alone; that *Sein und Zeit* is only a fragment of a much larger project of course testifies to this, and attention can again be drawn to the fact that the “*Grundzüge einer phänomenologischen Destruktion der Geschichte der Ontologie am Leitfaden der Problematik der Temporalität*”, which was intended to supplement it, was later pointed to by Heidegger himself as the precursor of the explicit development of certain concepts of the history of being. As we already cited:

Weil man überall das Seins-Geschied nur als Geschichte und dieses als Geschehen vorstellt, versucht man vergeblich, dieses Geschehen aus dem zu deuten, was in “Sein und Zeit” über die Geschichtlichkeit des Daseins (nicht des Seins) gesagt ist. Dagegen bleibt der einzig mögliche Weg, schon von “Sein und Zeit” her den späteren Gedanken über das Seins-Geschied vorzudenken, das Durchdenken dessen, was in “Sein und Zeit” über die Destruktion der ontologischen Lehre vom Sein des Seienden dargelegt wird.³

The existential analysis was intended from the outset to form the groundwork for a consideration of the essence of the history of philosophy, which for Heidegger was the history of the West as such. A full understanding of the existential analysis cannot, therefore, forbear a grasp of its ultimately historical horizon of inquiry.

² Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, pp. 332-333 To the word “*Eigentlichkeit*” in the fourth line is appended to the edition of 1949 the note: ‘aus dem Eignen des Er-eignens zu denken.’

³ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 9

But the unequivocal goal of the existential analysis was to raise the question of being. We can now see the sense in which the horizon of this programme was essentially historical. Heidegger emphasised more than once that *Sein und Zeit* was written out of the basic experience of *Seinsvergessenheit*.⁴ The attempt to raise the question of being was the attempt, in Heidegger's words, 'keine neuen Vorstellungen vom Seienden zur Kenntnis zu bringen, sondern das Menschsein in die Wahrheit des Seyns zu gründen und diese Gründung im Erdenken des Seyns und des Da-seins vorzubereiten.'⁵ This grounding and its preparation was to be understood as something essentially historical, having to do with mankind in his essential historicity. It is to be understood, as we have seen, as the grounding of an essential relation between man and being, and thus as the grounding of historical mankind in his essence. The true depth of *Sein und Zeit*, the ultimate significations and implications of its analyses, cannot be appreciated independently of this historical horizon.

Indeed, without an understanding of the history of being the reason why it is necessary to raise the question of being at all, that is, why Heidegger's philosophical project is a valid one, cannot be properly apprehended, nor why it should take, in the first place, the rarefied form of an existential analysis of "*Dasein*" – on the face of it a rather recondite and *recherché* concept to say the least. Those who never read Heidegger beyond the final pages of *Sein und Zeit* will have trouble accounting for the philosophical programme that motivates the "existential turn" of our ontological understanding inaugurated by *Sein und Zeit*.

The raising of the question of being remained Heidegger's sole philosophical project: 'Die Frage nach dem "Sinn", d. h. nach der Erläuterung in "Sein und Zeit" die Frage nach der Gründung des Entwurfsbereichs, kurz nach der *Wahrheit des Seyns* ist und bleibt *meine* Frage und ist *meine einzige*, denn sie gilt ja dem *Einzigsten*.'⁶ Thus the two phases of Heidegger's thinking must be understood to be unified under a single project. In so far as they are related to one another in the way demonstrated, they cannot be conceived to be two different and ultimately separate attempts to realise the same project; rather, they constitute two complementary parts of the same project.

The philosophy of the history of being advances a claim on historical mankind, a claim for the historical grounding of a new relation to the truth of being. This claim, however, if it is itself to claim ultimate validity, must be transcendently (not employed here according to Heidegger's usage) – that is, in an important sense, a-historically – grounded. And this is precisely what the existential analysis intends, employing the a-historical methodology of *phenomenology*. Phenomenology gives Heidegger an entry point into history from which can be grounded a transcendental claim on historical mankind, that is, on history

⁴ Cf. in particular Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, p. 328.

⁵ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 86

⁶ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 10

as such. Paradoxically it seems, the temporalisation of ontology, which the existential turn accomplishes, is attached to an a-temporal, a-historical validity point. The complex issues surrounding the question of the consistency of this thought with Heidegger's philosophical commitments, as well as the question of the ultimate status to be attributed to Heidegger's claims, will be briefly returned to in the next part.

Thus the philosophical project of the raising of the question of being, the project of grounding a new relation of historical mankind to the truth of being, has *necessarily* two phases: The elaboration of the historical structures within which such a new relation is claimed or demanded, and the grounding of this claim or demand in the transcendental structures which make history (being necessarily the history of the truth of being) possible in the first place.

But some commentators have professed to have found more than two phases in Heidegger's thinking. Usually a third and final phase is added to capture the very late and purportedly disparate thinking of the fourfold, the attempt to think the holding sway of being in its pure truth, without recourse to beings. On some criteria of differentiation such a division is acceptable, indeed even necessary, but obfuscates the fact that once Heidegger had reached the philosophical horizon of the history of being he never again left it. This is shown most acutely perhaps by the very late lecture *Zeit und Sein* (1961), but even more obviously by the fact that the very thematisation of the fourfold in the later texts always takes place within the context of a critique of technology and thus of metaphysical thinking, both of these, as we have seen, functioning as central and essential concepts of the philosophy of the history of being. There are only two essentially contrastive phases in Heidegger's thought, and they are the two necessary parts of his single philosophical project.

Heidegger's "*Kehre*"

What, then, are we to make of Heidegger's so called "turn" [*Kehre*], for the sake of which so much commentary has gone to press? Is there a turn between the two phases of Heidegger's thinking, which we have identified, and, if so, in what sense exactly?

In the first place, it should be noted that more than one application of *Kehre* can be identified within Heidegger's writings. As we have already seen, in the eponymous lecture, the *Kehre* refers unambiguously to a historical turn in the history of being, to what Heidegger had previously called the other beginning. It is a turn out of the danger and the need of *Seinsverlassenheit* into the truth of being. In the *Brief über den Humanismus* Heidegger mentions the *Kehre* in relation to *Sein und Zeit* and his lecture *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*:

[B]ei der Veröffentlichung von "Sein und Zeit" [wurde] der dritte Abschnitt des ersten Teiles, "Zeit und Sein"...zurückgehalten (vgl. "Sein und Zeit" S. 39). Hier Kehrt sich das Ganze um. Der fragliche Abschnitt wurde zurückgehalten, weil das Denken im zureichenden Sagen dieser Kehre versagte und so mit Hilfe der Sprache der Metaphysik nicht durchkam. Der Vortrag "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit", der 1930 gedacht und mitgeteilt, aber erst 1943 gedruckt wurde, gibt einen gewissen Einblick in das Denken der Kehre von "Sein und Zeit" zu "Zeit und Sein". Diese Kehre ist nicht eine Änderung des Standpunktes von "Sein und Zeit", sondern in ihr gelangt das versuchte Denken erst in die Ortschaft der Dimension, aus der "Sein und Zeit" erfahren ist, und zwar erfahren in der Grunderfahrung der Seinsvergessenheit.⁷

We have already mentioned the way in which the lecture *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* gives an insight into this *Kehre*. As an interrogation of the essence of truth, it belongs to the overcoming of metaphysics. This is a second meaning of the *Kehre*. In so far as it was projected at the very outset of *Sein und Zeit* it must be conceived to be something wholly internal to that project's architectonic.

The majority of Heidegger's commentators mean by the *Kehre* something different again: a quasi-biographical turn that took place in the early thirties, which may or may not have had to do with an alliance with National Socialism, and one which involved fundamentally an *abandonment* of the thematic of *Sein und Zeit* – an abandonment precipitated by the perception of various failures alleged to be immanent to the very project of *Sein und Zeit* – for a more or less radically new basic philosophical conception, horizon, thematic, etc. Put like this, one can only conclude that this turn is a fiction, as our lengthy exegesis has shown. Nevertheless, there is certainly in some sense an identifiable turn at least in Heidegger's philosophical *formulation* that took place relatively shortly after the publication of *Sein und Zeit* – we find no new existential analyses, on the face of it anyway; lectures and essays take precedence over book length treatises; there is an increasing emphasis on poetry; the philosophical methodology appears to change – and all this is ostensibly accompanied by an evolution of thematics.

We have therefore at least three possible candidates for a *Kehre* in relation to Heidegger's philosophy.⁸ We claim that all of these are ultimately the same; they all name the same *Kehre*, the same event – a *de-cisive* event in the history of being. This is to say that the other beginning, the overcoming of metaphysics and the raising of the question of being are fundamentally – that is, in terms of their structure and in terms of the antipodes of their rotations – all of them the same. This is the case even though the raising of the question of

⁷ Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, pp. 327-328

⁸ A further, fourth meaning for the *Kehre* might point to the existential turn, about which we have heard previously – the turn towards an existential horizon for the analysis of understanding. This turn would already have been accomplished by the end of the published part of *Sein und Zeit*.

being and the overcoming of metaphysics are preparatory for the other beginning, and even though metaphysical thinking, in all its ramifications, cannot be overcome until the other beginning comes to pass.

To understand this we might say that these three meanings of *Kehre* point to the same happening, but in different degrees of focus. The other beginning names a world-historical event; the overcoming of metaphysics points to this event in so far as it is a turn within thinking (that is, within man's relationship to being); and Heidegger's step beyond the existential analytic is the coming to pass of the truth of being for an individual thinker.

Now, in accordance with our initial premise – which we have now established –, there are essentially two phases in Heidegger's thinking: the existential analysis of *Dasein* and the philosophy of the history of being. In so far as Heidegger's turn can be characterised as the turn out of the horizon of the existential analysis (the third meaning of *Kehre* above), it is to be anticipated that it can be characterised more incisively as the turn between these two phases of thought. How are we to understand the *Kehre* once it is expressed in this way, and what light is thence thrown onto the other two meanings of the turn that we have identified?

At the surface level, the turn from the existential analysis to the philosophy of the history of being can be portrayed simply as the *historicisation* of the structures of disclosure: *Dasein* – the exposition of the way in which they make possible and determine all history as such.⁹ The moment at which this occurs in Heidegger's writings can be precisely pin-pointed to the sudden eruption of the category of history in the lecture *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*.¹⁰

A deeper excavation reveals, however, something more. The concept of *Dasein* illuminates the path out of the metaphysical constellation of thinking; it is essential to the overcoming of the philosophy of the subject. It is this factor which explains why the historicisation of the structures of *Dasein* is nothing incidental nor arbitrary, but already implied within their very first description: *Dasein* is employed precisely in order to overcome the *historical* tradition of metaphysics. The thinking of the truth of being is only possible in so far as the categories of metaphysics have been broken down beforehand. The concept of *Dasein* accomplishes this in so far as it names the clearing within which being presences, in so far as it grounds the concept of truth as disclosure, whilst nevertheless employing, in doing this, concepts essential to the tradition, such as, most importantly perhaps, that of *understanding*. Thus the concept of *Dasein*, indeed the very project of the existential analysis, is always essentially ambiguous, duplicitous perhaps, employing traditional concepts

⁹ Cf. Der Spruch des Anaximander, *Holzwege*, pp. 311-312: 'Der ekstatische Charakter des Da-seins...ist die für uns zunächst erfahrbare Entsprechung zum epochalen Charakter des Seins. Das epochale Wesen des Seins ereignet das ekstatische Wesen des Da-seins. Die Ek-sistenz des Menschen steht das Ekstatische aus und wahrt so das Epochale des Seins, zu dessen Wesen das Da und somit das Da-sein gehört.'

¹⁰ *Wegmarken*, pp. 189-190

in order, precisely thereby, to overcome them. 'Das Da-sein steht in "Sein und Zeit" noch im Anschein des "Anthropologischen" und "Subjektivistischen" und "Individualistischen" u.s.f., und doch ist von allem das Gegen-teil im Blick'¹¹. And: 'Fundamentalontologie [ist] das Übergängliche. Sie begründet und überwindet alle Ontologie, muß aber notwendig vom Bekannten und Geläufigen ausgehen, und deshalb steht sie immer im Zwielficht.'¹² Conceived both from the perspective of subjectivism and anthropology, from the conception of man as *animal rationale*, and from the perspective of the other beginning as the 'Entwerfung der Wahrheit des Seyns', *Dasein* is what Heidegger calls the 'Wendungspunkt in der Kehre des Ereignisses'¹³, the fulcrum around which the turn in the history of being takes place, around which the entire structure of the history of being pivots. As Heidegger also puts it: 'Das Da-sein ist die *Krisis* zwischen dem ersten und dem anderen Anfang'¹⁴. But *Dasein* is structurally determinative of the history of being precisely in so far as it is itself the coming to truth of this history.

However, in so far as the phenomenological introduction and exposition of the concept of *Dasein* constitutes the existential turn, it amounts to a "deconstruction" of the tradition in the light of the truth of being; that is, it presents a genealogy of the central metaphysical concepts, showing the way in which they are grounded in an essential distortion of the truth of being.

But all this means that the existential analytic is not simply to be left behind, jettisoned as we move onto the horizon of the later philosophy of the history of being; the ladder is not to be cast away beneath us, to use Wittgenstein's metaphor; for it remains essential to the project of overcoming metaphysics, which is the definitive theme of the philosophy of the history of being.

Perhaps most importantly of all, this means that the *Kehre* is something wholly immanent to Heidegger's *initial* project; it is not at all something that that project *itself* goes through, nor something imposed on it from outside; in other words, the *Kehre* is not at all a change in Heidegger's philosophical intent, or horizon of questioning; not even a change in philosophical *perspective*:

Das Denken der Kehre *ist* eine Wendung in meinem Denken. Aber diese Wendung erfolgt nicht auf grund einer Änderung des Standpunktes oder gar der Preisgabe der Fragestellung in "Sein und Zeit". Das Denken der Kehre ergibt sich daraus, daß ich bei der zu denkende Sache geblieben bin, d. h. nach der Hinsicht gefragt habe, die schon in "Sein und Zeit" (S. 39) unter dem Titel "Zeit und Sein" angezeigt wurde.

¹¹ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 295

¹² *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 305

¹³ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 311

¹⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 295

Die Kehre ist in erster Linie nicht ein Vorgang im fragenden Denken; sie gehört in den durch die Titel "Sein und Zeit", "Zeit und Sein" genannten Sachverhalt selbst.¹⁵

It cannot then be biographically understood, nor developmentally; indeed, nor chronologically if we are to grasp the way in which the existential analysis remains retained within the philosophy of the history of being. Rather, the *Kehre* is an internal structurality of Heidegger's thought as such, a fundamental configuration of its architectonic, which, not for incidental reasons, itself mirrors the structure of truth. 'Die Kehre spielt in Sachverhalt selbst.'¹⁶

Commentators are wrong to suggest, then, that the *Kehre* is in any sense a process of abandonment.¹⁷ That it is, is, of course, the usual story, peddled even by such subtle commentators as William J. Richardson himself. He writes: 'the transformation of Heidegger I into Heidegger II [that is, the early Heidegger into the later Heidegger – although the gross simplification and, let it be said, functionalisation introduced by using such labels is respectively somewhat absurd and wholly antithetical to Heidegger's thinking] is born out of a necessity imposed by the original experience of Being as *finite* (negative). For the shift of focus from There-being [*Dasein*] to Being (which, as far as we can see, characterizes the decisive difference between the two periods) was demanded by the exigencies of the hermeneutic analysis itself, as soon as it became clear that the primacy in the Being-process belongs to Being itself.'¹⁸ We take this to imply quite straightforwardly that, whether or not for reasons internal to the project of the existential analytic, Heidegger was forced, unforeseen, at a certain point, to move onto a new horizon, and that therefore the *Kehre*, as it in actual fact took place, was not projected already at the outset of that project.¹⁹

¹⁵ Letter to Richardson, p. xvii-xix. This directly contradicts Kockelmans' assessment on page 53 of his *On the Truth of Being*: 'In *Being and Time*, Heidegger had tried to approach the relationship between man and Being from the perspective of man. In his later works he tried to think the same relationship from the perspective of Being.'

¹⁶ Letter to Richardson, p. xix.

¹⁷ David Farrell Krell is a notable exception. See his *Intimations of Mortality*, Chapter 6.

¹⁸ Richardson, *Through Phenomenology to Thought*, p. 624.

¹⁹ Here are two further examples of this misunderstanding. In his article "Interrupting truth" (in *Heidegger Toward the Turn*, ed. Risser), John Sallis argues that at least one fundamental determination of the *Kehre* is the fact that, whilst in *Sein und Zeit* truth is thematised merely as disclosure [*Erschlossenheit*], in later texts untruth or concealment is thought as part of the essence of truth, and thus that the analyses of *Sein und Zeit* were deficient in some decisive respect. But we have shown not merely that untruth was already thought as the essence of truth in *Sein und Zeit* through the ontological determination of *Dasein* as *Verfallen*, but further that this determination of *Dasein* grounds the later thinking of the concealment essential to truth.

In his contribution to *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger* ("The Unity of Heidegger's Thought") Olafson argues that the horizon of *Sein und Zeit* was abandoned because it evoked an unassailable dichotomy between the plurality of *Daseins* and the singularity of being. But this is to make the usual mistake of taking the meaning of *Dasein* to be "human individual" or "subject". Although it is of course true that, as he himself admits, Heidegger sometimes articulates himself in *Sein und Zeit* and the lectures of the period as if this were the case, our account has shown that *Dasein* is

But then it might be wondered: if the *Kehre* amounts to no abandonment, why was it that Heidegger withheld the third division of the first part of his original project of raising the question of being? The answer has already been given in the above citation from *Brief über den Humanismus*: ‘Der fragliche Abschnitt wurde zurückgehalten, weil das Denken im zureichenden *Sagen* dieser Kehre versagte und so mit Hilfe der *Sprache* der Metaphysik nicht durchkam.’ [My italics.] The problem was the *saying* of the *Kehre*; the problem was that Heidegger could not decisively overcome metaphysics until he had developed a non-metaphysical *language*.²⁰ This he had not yet accomplished in *Sein und Zeit* itself – perhaps it receives its first attempted articulation in *Beiträge zur Philosophie*.²¹ For it required a *leap* [*Sprung*] to be taken,²² a leap in thinking, and apparently, during the initial formulation of

merely a *structurality*, merely the structure of disclosure as such, and that in consequence it is of no lesser generality, structurally speaking, than being itself.

²⁰ Also suggested here: ‘denn das Ungenügende des zurückgehaltenen Stückes [“*Zeit und Sein*” being one of these] war nicht eine Unsicherheit der Fragerichtung und ihres Bereiches, sondern nur die der rechten Ausarbeitung.’ [Mein Bisheriger Weg in *Besinnung*, p. 414] Robert Bernasconi corroborates our claim that the *Kehre* is primarily to be understood in terms of language: ‘It is in an experience to be undergone with language that Heidegger... seeks to introduce us to the turning (*Kehre*).’ [*The Question of Language in Heidegger’s History of Being*, p. 74]

²¹ But is it possible at all? For is it not the case that the metaphysical schema of subject and object is so intricately bound up with subject-predicate semantics that genuine propositions are not possible beyond the boundaries of metaphysical thought, indeed beyond the boundaries of truth conceived as correctness? It would surely then be ultimately impossible to articulate the truth of being. As Heidegger himself writes: ‘Das Schwierige liegt in der Sprache. Unsere abendländischen Sprachen sind in je verschiedener Weise Sprachen des metaphysischen Denkens. Ob das Wesen der abendländischen Sprachen in sich nur metaphysisch und darum endgültig durch die Onto-Theo-Logik geprägt ist, oder ob diese Sprachen andere Möglichkeiten des Sagens und d. h. zugleich des sagenden Nichtsagens gewähren, muß offen bleiben.’ [*Identität und Differenz*, p. 66] Might the articulation of the truth of being – “*das sagende Nichtsagen*” – amount ultimately to silence – albeit a peculiarly pregnant silence? Is this also the meaning of those loaded words with which Heidegger closes the lecture *Zeit und Sein*: ‘Ein Hindernis... bleibt auch das Sagen vom Ereignis in der Weise eines Vortrags. Er hat nur in Aussagesätzen gesprochen.’ [*Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 25] Bernasconi sees this as essentially connected to the fact that ‘*Ereignis* is not a word for being. *Ereignis* is the word that arises from the experience of the *lack of a word* for being.’ [*The Question of Language in Heidegger’s History of Being*, p. 86] It is intended to radically contrast with the various metaphysical names for being hitherto employed. Beyond metaphysics being cannot be named – that is, it cannot be said. But this is not to suggest, Bernasconi notes, that the remembrance of metaphysics, the dialogue with the essential thinkers, which must needs make use of the language of metaphysics, has not already moved beyond metaphysics – precisely in order to disclose the truth of metaphysics. Metaphysical language can already speak non-metaphysically, and this is because the issue here is not one of a simple opposition.

But what sense is to be made of the thought that thinking must speak silently? Heidegger explains: ‘Supremely thoughtful utterance does not consist simply in growing taciturn when it is a matter of saying what is properly to be said; it consists in saying the matter in such a way that it is named in nonsaying. The utterance of thinking is a telling silence. Such utterance corresponds to the most profound essence of language, which has its origin in silence.’ [NI, pp. 471-472 This citation and its reference is taken from Bernasconi’s book. I have been unable to locate it in Heidegger’s writings.]. See Rosen’s *The Question of Being* (Chapters 5, 8 and *passim*) for the view that no sense can be made of this.

²² Cf. *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, §§115-167. The leap is necessary because mere opposition can never decisively break free from what it opposes. As Pattison notes in regard to the overcoming of metaphysics: ‘we cannot argue our way out, since all forms of argument we could possibly use are familiar to the tradition. We cannot argue our way out, we can only leap’. [*The Later Heidegger*, p. 17]

Sein und Zeit, Heidegger had not correctly estimated quite how far he would have to leap – perhaps he wondered whether a bridge could not be built. But: ‘Es gibt hier keine Brücke, sondern nur den Sprung.’²³ But in any case, the development of a new non-metaphysical language – or rather, as Heidegger himself insists, the transformation of our relationship to the old language – is so far from being the abandonment of the original project that it is rather precisely the culmination of it. In the last place, then, the *Kehre* is to be understood as something linguistic; as the development of a radically new philosophical language adequate to the saying of the truth of being.

What “is” *Ereignis*?

Before moving onto the critical part of our engagement with Heidegger, we should like, in the light of all that has gone before, to consider the meaning of what is perhaps the key word of Heidegger’s later philosophy. As we shall see, it illuminates in a particularly striking way the figure of thought which is to occupy us in the following chapters.

Heidegger’s exposition of the concept of time-space in the lecture *Zeit und Sein*, to which we have already referred, occurs within the context of a discussion of the way in which time and being hold sway. Heidegger writes: ‘Wir sagen nicht: Sein ist, Zeit ist, sondern: Es gibt Sein und es gibt Zeit.’²⁴ The German “*es gibt*” is translated into English as “there is” or “there are”, but literally means “it gives”. In what way, Heidegger asks, are time and being *given*? He answers: ‘Das Geben im “Es gibt Sein” zeigte sich als Schicken und als Geschick von Anwesenheit in ihren epochalen Wandlungen. Das Geben im “Es gibt Zeit” zeigte sich als lichtendes Reichen des vierdimensionalen Bereiches.’²⁵ And what is the “*it*” that gives time and being? In response to this question Heidegger writes: ‘Im schicken des Geschickes von Sein, im Reichen der Zeit zeigt sich ein Zueignen, ein Übereignen, nämlich von Sein als Anwesenheit und von Zeit als Bereich des Offenen in ihr Eigenes. Was beide, Zeit und Sein, in ihr Eigenes, d. h. in ihr Zusammengehören, bestimmt, nennen wir: *das Ereignis*.’²⁶ Thus: ‘Der Zeit-Raum ist als Fügung der Wahrheit ursprünglich die Augenblicks-Stätte des Ereignisses.’²⁷

But we must be careful in simply equating *Ereignis* with the “*Es*” in “*Es gibt*”, since it is imperative that we are not to take it as something that in any sense “is”. This would be, given what Heidegger has previously said about being, to take it as an *Anwesende* when it is precisely *Anwesenheit* itself which it is supposed to “explain”. Heidegger is clear that we are

²³ *Was Heißt Denken?*, pp. 4-5

²⁴ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 5

²⁵ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 17

²⁶ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 20

²⁷ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 30

neither able to explain *Ereignis*: ‘Es gibt nichts anderes, worauf das Ereignis noch zurückführt, woraus es gar erklärt werden könnte’²⁸; nor able to immediately express what *Ereignis* means in a propositional form. *Ereignis* cannot function as the subject of a proposition in the necessary way. If it cannot be said, nevertheless *Ereignis* “is” that which itself grounds all saying. ‘Im Er-eynig schwingt das Wesen dessen, was als Sprache spricht, die einmal das Haus des Seins genannt wurde.’²⁹ And: ‘Haus des Seins ist die Sprache, weil sie als die Sage die Weise des Ereignisses ist.’³⁰ Indeed: ‘Ereignis ist sagend.’³¹ However a few things can be said about the way in which Heidegger intends *Ereignis* to be understood.

In his own words: ‘Er-eignen heißt ursprünglich: er-äugen, d. h. erblicken im Blicken zu sich rufen, an-eignen. Das Wort Ereignis soll jetzt, aus der gewiesenen Sache her gedacht, als Leitwort im Dienst des Denkens sprechen. Als so gedachtes Leitwort läßt es sich sowenig übersetzen wie das griechische Leitwort λόγος und das chinesische Tao.’³²

Can it not be said about *Ereignis* simply that it is being itself? After all, in *Beiträge zur Philosophie* it is described as the first answer to the *Seinsfrage*. In any case it is not to be understood, in the metaphysical sense, as just one more interpretation in the history of philosophy of what being is or means. Indeed, *Ereignis*, as the “it” that “gives” historically in the form of the *Geschick*, itself is what first makes different interpretations of being historically possible.³³ *Ereignis* is the ground of, is, all history: ‘Das Ereignis ist die ursprüngliche Geschichte selbst.’³⁴

²⁸ *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, p. 258

²⁹ *Identität und Differenz*, p. 28

³⁰ *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, p. 267

³¹ *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, p. 263

³² *Identität und Differenz*, p. 25 Of course, Heidegger’s words have not been heeded here and *Ereignis* has found many different renderings into English. Typically these translations do not grasp the etymology of the word. As Heidegger writes here, and as the *Kluge Etymologische Wörterbuch* confirms, *Ereignis* derived originally from *er-äugen*, meaning “to put before the eyes” (i. e. to make present), not simply from the German root *eigen*. The recent English translation of *Beiträge zur Philosophie* makes a very obvious error, then, when it translates the word as merely a prefixation and substantivisation of the German verb “to own”: “enowning”. This in itself would not necessarily be so bad had the translators given so much as a justification of their choice and marked their etymological discrepancy. However in the preface to their translation they show no awareness at all of the fact that *Ereignis* is not directly etymologically related to *eigen*. Heidegger, of course, uses the word in close connection to other words which clearly are related to the verb *eigen*, and obviously intends in this use a relation to *eigen* to be heard. He writes for example: ‘Ereignis ist eignende Er-äugnis.’ [*Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 44] The problem simply is that in this use something like *er-äugen* comes much more to the fore than something like *eigen*. Rather than merely a *belongingness* of man to being, an owning generalised absolutely, *Ereignis* primarily indicates the “Einblitz” – the “giving” of being and time – in virtue of which presence as such is constituted. This primordial presence is the ground of the *belongingness* of man to being in so far as there can only be presence for man.

³³ In this sense, as is noted on page 44 of *Zur Sache des Denkens*, in the ‘Protokoll zu einem Seminar über den Vortrag “Zeit und Sein”’, with the thinking of *Ereignis* that is attempted here, the *Seinsgeschichte*, comes to an end. ‘Die Metaphysik ist die Geschichte der Seinsprägungen, d. h. vom Ereignis her gesehen, die Geschichte des Sichentziehens des Schickenden zugunsten der im Schicken gegebenen Schickungen eines jeweiligen Anwesenlassens des Anwesenden. Die Metaphysik ist Seinsvergessenheit und d. h. die Geschichte der Verbergung und des Entzugs dessen, das Sein gibt. Die Einkehr des Denkens in das Ereignis ist somit gleichbedeutend mit dem Ende dieser Geschichte

It is rather the case that being is *ereignet* in *Ereignis* by *Ereignis* itself. The same holds for time in so far as being and time are one in *Anwesenheit*. Heidegger writes: 'In der Wendung: "Sein als das Ereignis" meint das "als" jetzt: Sein, Anwesenlassen geschickt im Ereignen, Zeit gereicht im Ereignen. Zeit und Sein ereignet im Ereignis.'³⁵ In *Beiträge zur Philosophie* Heidegger characterises *Ereignis* as the "*Wesung*", the "holding sway" of being, as the way in which being holds sway. He writes for example: 'Das Seyn west als das Ereignis.'³⁶ As the holding sway of being, as that which determines being and time in their belonging together, *Ereignis* is to be thought as the law of presence and absence, as the law of all presencing and absencing, as that which determines the way in which all that holds sway holds sway. '[Ereignis] erbringt das An- und Abwesende in sein jeweilig Eigenes'³⁷. As such it is nothing "over and above" what *is*, nothing "over and above" beings as a whole; rather it is their immanent principle, that which determines all that is in coming to be and passing away, in presence and absence. It is that law which first makes presence and absence what they are, which presences presence and absences absence, which therefore makes being – and time, and being as time – first possible.

But as this principle it is to be thought of as fundamental history. It is what determines history in its epochal structurality as the history of "constellations" of being. It is the law of being's constellations. As such, a *withdrawal*, an "*Entzug*" belongs essentially to it. In so far as it gives, *Ereignis* withdraws itself in its truth. 'Das Ereignis ist in ihm selber *Enteignis*'³⁸. The *Anwesenheit* withdraws in favour of the *Anwesende*. Its withdrawal grounds history as the *Geschick*. The *Schickende* itself holds itself back, making epochal history first possible. The history of being is ultimately the history of the self-withdrawal of *Ereignis*. But this self-withdrawal of *Ereignis*, which, in regard of time-space, is determinable as the refusal of *Anwesenheit* belonging essentially to the temporal dimensions of past and future, is the same as the withdrawal of being in its truth that grounds the history of metaphysics, the history of *Seinsverlassenheit*. And in so far as *Ereignis* is already the principle and the structurality of history, the other beginning, the *Kehre* out of the epoch of *Ge-stell* into the truth of being – the "*Einblick in das was ist*" –, is to be understood as nothing but the *Ereignis* of *Ereignis*, the cosmic principle coming to its own truth. 'Einblick in das

des Entzugs.' Being is thought in its truth, rather than being thought in merely one more metaphysical determination; that is, being itself is finally thought without respect to beings. This is to say that the ontological difference has finally been made. *Ereignis*, as the ground of all history, is not one more historical interpretation of being. It is itself beyond all history; it is non-historical. Heidegger writes: 'Dieses aber, das Schickende als das Ereignis, ist selbst ungeschichtlich, besser geschicklos.' [*Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 44] This means that the end of the history of being is at the same time the turn into the other beginning. On this historical logic cf. Michel Haar's Preface to *The Song of the Earth*.

³⁴ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 31

³⁵ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, pp. 22-23

³⁶ *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, p. 30

³⁷ *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, p. 258

was ist, ist das Ereignis selber, als welches die Wahrheit des Seins zum wahrlosen Sein sich verhält und steht.’³⁹

Thus, finally, the following can be said of *Ereignis*: that man belongs essentially to it:

Im Sein als Anwesen bekundet sich der Angang, der uns Menschen so angeht, daß wir im Vernehmen und Übernehmen dieses Angangs das Auszeichnende des Menschseins erlangt haben. Dieses Übernehmen des Angangs von Anwesen beruht aber im Innestehen im Bereich des Reichens, als welche uns die vierdimensionale eigentliche Zeit erreicht hat.

Sofern es Sein und Zeit nur gibt im Ereignen, gehört zu diesem das Eigentümliche, daß es den Menschen als den, der Sein vernimmt, indem er innesteht in der eigentlichen Zeit, in sein Eigenes bringt. So geeignet gehört der Mensch in das Ereignis.⁴⁰

In so far as thinking essentially characterises man, and thinking is always in one sense the thinking of being, man and being must belong in some way together. Nevertheless, we are not to understand this belonging together as founded on the representational thinking of metaphysics; rather, man and being belong together in so far as being can only *presence* given man. Heidegger writes: ‘Sein west und währt nur, indem es durch seinen Anspruch den Menschen an-geht. Denn erst der Mensch, offen für das Sein, läßt dieses als An-wesen ankommen. Solches An-wesen braucht das Offene einer Lichtung und bleibt so durch dieses Brauchen dem Menschenwesen übereignet.’⁴¹ And: ‘Das Sein selbst aber gehört zu uns; denn nur bei uns kann es als Sein wesen, d. h. an-wesen.’⁴² And even: ‘Das Ereignis ereignet den Menschen in den Brauch für es selbst.’⁴³

In so far as *Ereignis* needs mankind, it is to be conceived as the *law* of mankind’s relation to being, to the truth of being; that is, as the *normativity* that stands behind the structure of history, the structure of *Dasein*, the structure of truth. *Ereignis* – (in a far deeper sense than time) structure as such perhaps – is the law which we might call “*onto-normativity*”. As Heidegger puts it:

Das Ereignis verleiht den Sterblichen den Aufenthalt in ihrem Wesen, daß sie vermögen, die Sprechenden zu sein. Verstehen wir unter dem “Gesetz” die Versammlung dessen, was jegliches in seinem Eigenen anwesen, in sein Gehöriges gehören läßt, dann ist das Ereignis das schlichteste und sanfteste aller Gesetze... Das Ereignis ist freilich nicht Gesetz im Sinne einer Norm, die irgendwo über uns schwebt, ist keine Verordnung, die einen Verlauf ordnet und regelt.

³⁸ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, p. 44

³⁹ *Die Technik und die Kehre*, p. 44

⁴⁰ *Zur Sache des Denkens*, pp. 23-24

⁴¹ *Identität und Differenz*, p. 19

⁴² *Identität und Differenz*, p. 20

⁴³ *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, p. 261

Das Ereignis ist *das* Gesetz, insofern es die Sterblichen in das Ereignen zu ihrem Wesen versammelt und darin hält.⁴⁴

It is, of course, the mortal's essence to dwell in disclosive relation to the truth of being.

In the following chapters we examine the possibility of this onto-normativity of *Ereignis* according to the contours with which Heidegger shapes it.

⁴⁴ *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, p. 259

Part IV:

Onto-Normativity

Chapter 13:

Conscience

The raising of the question of being is motivated by grounds that Heidegger's philosophy itself attempts to justify through developing an account of being which makes the raising of the question of being a historical necessity for the essence of mankind; that is, necessary for mankind to exist according to his essence.¹ For, according to Heidegger, it is the essence of mankind to exist as the protector, guardian, even shepherd of being, and thus to have *disclosed* being as such in its truth. As later texts affirm, this essence is grounded in the ontological constitution of *Dasein* as *Sorge*, care: care for being. The analysis of *Dasein*, of those structures that make disclosure possible at all, of those structures which ground the belonging together of man and being, is intended ultimately to show that this is the case. We may note in passing that in so far as philosophy is essentially the thinking of being, Heidegger is here giving a transcendental account of the necessity of philosophy, and thereby a transcendental justification for the existentiality of philosophical thinking to which he himself committed his life.

But in this fourth and final part we aim, in the first place, to present a fundamental critique of the claim that it accords with the essence of mankind to disclose being in its truth. In doing this we will be undermining the claimed necessity of the question of being and thus the basic *philosophical* motivation for Heidegger's philosophical engagement as such. Our critique is, in an important sense, immanent to the Heideggerian philosophy, to the extent that we aim to impose upon it no considerations beyond its own concerns. We aim instead merely to present further phenomenological analysis of two of its key themes: conscience and resoluteness. If our critique is successful, the whole edifice of Heidegger's philosophy will fall. Fragments of exceptional philosophical importance may remain; but the foundation will have been removed from their original architectonic.

¹ 'Die philosophische Frage muß ihre Notwendigkeit in sich selbst tragen, sie muß – hinreichend entfaltet – diese Notwendigkeit selbst sichtbar machen.' [*Grundfragen der Philosophie*, pp. 106-107]

For Heidegger, as we have seen, conscience is a call to authenticity grounded in the structure of *Sorge*. It is the call to authenticity as the silent but determined call calling *Dasein* out of its lostness in *das Man* to being its self as essentially being-guilty. *Dasein* itself, as *Sorge*, is its caller. The call of conscience is disclosive. The mode of *Befindlichkeit* corresponding to the disclosive call of conscience is *Angst*, as that *Befindlichkeit* in which the essence of *Dasein*'s factual existence as such is disclosed to *Dasein*. The proper understanding of the call of conscience Heidegger names *Gewissen-haben-wollen*. This has its own mode of disclosure – determined by the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, by understanding as the projection upon the own-most possibility of being, and by the mode of speech of silence – and this is resoluteness [*Ent-schlossenheit*]. Resoluteness itself is disclosed in the call of conscience in so far as the call of conscience precisely calls *Dasein* to this mode of disclosure, which is the same as to say, to the mode of being of authenticity.

Conscience is a call to resoluteness. This claim we do *not* wish to deny. However we wish to understand it differently to Heidegger; for we wish to understand both conscience and resoluteness differently.

What is conscience? For Heidegger, it is grounded in the *structure* of *Dasein* as *Sorge* – as we already emphasised, it is a *structural* call. But what does this mean? It does not mean that conscience is a voice that speaks out, in the mode of silence, upon the collision, as it were, of two or more of the structural components that constitute *Dasein*. For conscience is merely the ever present, but for the most part covered over, disclosure of the being of *Dasein* (*Dasein*'s pre-thematic understanding of its own being: 'Zum *Dasein* gehört aber wesentlich, daß es mit der Erschlossenheit seiner Welt ihm selbst erschlossen ist, so daß es *sich immer schon versteht*.'²) become thematic – although, of course, not necessarily conceptual – in the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, that *Befindlichkeit* in which the essence of *Dasein*'s factual existence as such – its "*daß es ist und als das Seiende, das es ist, seinkönnend zu sein hat*" – is disclosed. The call of conscience is the disclosure of the factual existence of *Dasein* as such, that is, the disclosure of the *structure* of *Dasein*'s being. It is in this sense, and in this sense alone, that it is a structural call.

But as it is commonly understood, conscience is not *merely* disclosive: it also presses a demand of some sort, a "should" or an "ought"; it makes a normative claim on existentiality. The fundamental philosophical question about conscience concerns the origin, the grounding of this "should". According to Heidegger, the "should" is expressed as the *demand* for an authentic mode of existence: 'Der vorrufende Rückruf des Gewissens gibt dem *Dasein* zu verstehen, daß es... aus der Verlorenheit in das *Man* sich zu ihm selbst zurückholen

² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 272

*soll*³. On his account of conscience, however, the origin or *ground* of this “should” is not immediately clear. Why does the mere disclosure of the factual existence of *Dasein*, and thus the *possibility* of the authenticity of *Dasein*’s being – and hence of the lostness of *Dasein* in *das Man* –, constitute, without further ado, this “should” of *Dasein*’s authentic mode of being?

We have been told, however, that the call of conscience discloses *Dasein*’s being-guilty; that is, that *Dasein* is guilty. The concept of guilt is, of course, *intrinsically* connected to a “should” – the “should” of innocence. If the call of conscience discloses that *Dasein* is guilty, then surely it thereby also discloses a corresponding “should”. Within Heidegger’s conceptuality, however, this line of thought will not work, since he affirms that *Dasein* is guilty in the grounds of its being, that is, is ontologically guilty, and that it is this ontological guilt which the call of conscience discloses. There is, then, no possible innocent mode of being to which *Dasein* can be called – innocence in this ontological sense is not a possibility for a being of the structure of *Sorge* – and therefore there can be no “should” to correspond to it. Heidegger writes: ‘Dieses Seiende [*das Dasein*] braucht sich nicht erst durch Verfehlung oder Unterlassung eine “Schuld” aufzuladen, es soll nur das “schuldig” – als welches es ist – *eigentlich sein*.’⁴ *Dasein* should authentically be the being-guilty that it as such is. This begs again the question: what is the ground (in the constitution of being of *Dasein*) of this “should” of authentically being-guilty?

Heidegger has already emphasised the significance of the way in which the call is apprehended, or better: *heard*. Perhaps the ground of the “should” of the call of conscience is to be understood in terms of the particular way in which the call is heard. As we have seen, the call discloses the possibility of the authentic mode of *Dasein*’s being. Heidegger writes: ‘Das rechte Hören des Anrufs kommt dann gleich einem Sichverstehen in seinem eigenen Seinkönnen, das heißt dem Sichentwerfen auf das *eigenste* *eigentliche* Schuldigwerdenkönnen.’⁵ The proper – that is, *genuine*, *bona fide* – hearing of the call is already, claims Heidegger, the projection of *Dasein* onto its own-most possibility of being. But then, rather than the origin of the “should” being accounted for, the phenomenon seems to be simply dissolved, since, if the proper hearing of the call of conscience, the call to an authentic mode of being, is *already* the understanding self-projection within this mode of being then there does not seem to be any ontological room for the “should”. And we may also wonder why it is the case that the proper hearing of the call, the *angst*-ful disclosure of the factual existence of *Dasein*, is already a projection onto *Dasein*’s own-most possibility of being. Heidegger gives us no additional clues concerning this crucial claim.

³ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 287 My italics.

⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 287

⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 287

Further, the call of conscience is supposedly for the most part not properly heard; we have been told that for the most part *Dasein* flees the disclosure of the call. Yet it is precisely in this mode of flight that the full weight of the “should” disclosed by the call of conscience surely comes to bear. The possibility of the “should”, and thus the proper understanding of the call, must be intelligible upon the horizon of the prevailing mode of flight of *Dasein* and therefore this understanding cannot already be a projection upon *Dasein's* own-most possibility of being. Accordingly, it might be argued that if the *proper* hearing of the call is to be taken as already the projection upon *Dasein's* own-most possibility of being, then, the “should” of the call of conscience must concern this proper hearing *itself*: rather than flee the disclosure of the call of conscience, *Dasein should* be properly attentive to it. But this has, of course, not explained the origin of the “should”. *Why should Dasein* be properly attentive to the call of conscience and not flee its disclosure? What would then define the *proper* hearing of the call *in the first place*?

Perhaps one could turn at this point to a norm of truth. *Dasein* should listen to the call correctly since that would lead to authentic, that is, true disclosure. Unfortunately, however, this cannot be Heidegger’s own strategy, since if the “should” is itself supposed to be disclosed by the call of conscience, and we have seen that it is, it cannot apply beforehand to the way in which the call is heard. Further, since the proper hearing of the call is supposed to be the same as *Dasein's* projection onto its own-most possibility of being, which is itself characterised as *Gewissen-haben-wollen*, the “should” of conscience apparently remains even *after* the call has been properly understood.

One might think that perhaps our question is disingenuous or unfair. Perhaps Heidegger does not attempt to provide grounds for the existential “should” that he advocates; perhaps he simply appeals to the phenomenology of an irreducible experience, which, as he puts it, “testifies” to *Dasein's* authentic mode of being. Whilst he is certainly appealing to the phenomenology of a particular mode of disclosure, he has, in previous analyses, hermeneutically grounded such phenomenology in the constitution of *Dasein's* being. Thus the phenomenology of *Angst*, for example, was supposed to be understood as arising from the ontological concern *Dasein* bears both for and about its being. It would be surprising were the phenomenology of conscience not to be similarly conceived.

In fact, for Heidegger, the structural origin of the “should” of the call of conscience is the disclosure of the *self-relation* of the *Sorge* structure. He writes: ‘Sofern es dem *Dasein* – als *Sorge* – um sein Sein geht, ruft es aus der Unheimlichkeit sich selbst als faktisch-verfallendes Man auf zu seinem Seinkönnen.’⁶ The “should” of the call of conscience is grounded in the concern that *Dasein* has for its own being: *Dasein* calls itself to the mode of

⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 287

being of authenticity in so far as, ontologically determined as *Sorge*, it cares about its being as such and as a whole, which self-concernful call is experienced in the sense of a “should”. Thus: ‘Der Ruf ist Ruf der Sorge.’⁷

However, this account of the grounds of the ontological “should” of authenticity cannot be satisfactory for several interrelated reasons: In the first place, it can be simply pointed out that this would mean that the “should” only becomes thematically disclosed, precisely when it does not need to be, namely, when *Dasein* is already in an authentic mode of being. As we enunciated already above: the “should” must be precisely intelligible for inauthentic *Dasein*; it cannot function as the “should” of authenticity, as a call to an authentic mode of being, if it is only ever effectively disclosed within that mode of being.⁸

In the second place, we must remember that to the structure of *Sorge* belongs the moment of *Verfallen*, *Dasein*’s flight from its uncanny existence into the familiarity of beings in the world. This flight is grounded by the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, in which the essence of *Dasein*’s existence is expressly disclosed to it. Rather than disclose its factual finite existence for what it is, *Dasein* absorbs itself, submerges itself, in the average world of the everyday in which such disclosure is levelled off. This flight is itself grounded by the structure of *Sorge*, *Dasein*’s concern for its own being. Concerned for its own being, *Dasein* flees the uncanny reality revealed in the disclosure of the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* and thus of the call of conscience. But this means that mere concern for its being, the structure of *Sorge*, taken alone, cannot ground a call to authenticity, to the express disclosure of factual existence, for it would sooner ground the opposite: a call to inauthenticity. How are we to understand the possibility of the self-concerned flight of *Dasein* if the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst* precisely grounds a call out of this mode of being? Surely this removes the ground of *Verfallen*. How can the very same disclosure ground at the very same time both this flight and this contrary “should”.

Finally: how in any case exactly is *Dasein*’s disclosure of its being supposed to ground a normative demand? It is no ontic concern, with which we are dealing here; it is merely an ontological one. The mere disclosure that its being is given over to itself and that it is lost amidst the possibilities of the everyday still leaves ontological room for an existential indifference towards an authentic mode of being – not merely an existentiell indifference.

⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 286

⁸ A related objection, and a proposed solution, is developed in detail by Stephen Mulhall in his commentary on *Sein und Zeit*. (Cf. *Heidegger and Being and Time* pp. 130-136.) Mulhall argues that Heidegger’s account leaves unintelligible how it is that conscience can call in the first place, since in the everyday mode of inauthenticity the authentic self that is the caller of conscience is totally covered over. It is thus inexplicable how *Dasein* is able to become authentic at all. Beneath Mulhall’s consideration of this lies the more general issue of what we might call existential “spontaneity”.

Why *should Dasein* be authentic and not inauthentic? Why should *this* be a matter of *Dasein's* concern?⁹

If the “should” of the call of conscience is to be given an existential ontological grounding, a grounding that leaves no ontological room for indifference to it, then this grounding must be found other than in the *mere* disclosure of the structural self-concern that characterises *Dasein*. – Or, alternatively, the “should” of the call of conscience is not to be construed as a call to authenticity.—

As an appendix to his positive elaboration of the existential foundation of the phenomenon of conscience Heidegger includes a discussion of the vulgar understanding of conscience and of the way in which an advocate of this understanding might respond to his own existential interpretation. As with the other existentials, the vulgar understanding of conscience is rooted in the *Verfallen* of *Dasein's* ontological constitution and the consequential interpretation of being always according to *Vorhandenheit*. Conscience is interpreted as something objectively present, usually as a faculty of the will, soul, etc. Of course, the vulgar understanding of conscience has its own justification; it is not simply false; rather, it has distorted the phenomenal facts in accordance with an essential distortion of the being of the being who interprets those facts. Heidegger, therefore, does not aim to disprove the vulgar interpretation of conscience; he aims rather to show the way in which it is grounded in the mode of being of inauthenticity, and therefore the way in which it belies the more original understanding that he himself presents.

One claim that Heidegger attributes to the vulgar understanding of conscience reads as follows: ‘Das Gewissen spricht je relativ auf eine bestimmte vollzogene oder gewollte Tat.’¹⁰ We could express this within the horizon of the existential analysis as follows: Conscience calls only with regard to particular projections. Heidegger himself, of course, wishes to deny this. The ontological conscience cares not for particular projections, but concerns itself with the mode of *Dasein's* being as such. Heidegger does not, however, wish to deny the everyday experience in which the call of conscience is always related to particular deeds. He writes: ‘Daß der Ruf häufig in solcher Ruftendenz erfahren wird, kann...nicht geleugnet werden. Die Frage bleibt nur, ob diese Ruferfahrung den Ruf sich völlig “ausrufen” läßt.’¹¹ Does the everyday experience of conscience listen to the full content of its call? Is it perhaps only a partial hearing?

⁹ At this point we might also wonder whether the disclosure of *Dasein's* being is sufficient to ground the flight of *Dasein*. This is a flight away from existential responsibility; but has Heidegger told us exactly why, merely on the basis of self-concern, such responsibility is to be fled from? Ontically such a flight would be understandable; responsibility represses our freedom, which we hold dear to ourselves. But why is responsibility so awful on the ontological level? And why is inauthenticity existentially so attractive?

¹⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 290

¹¹ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 293

Heidegger, it has been argued, fails to ground the “should” of the call of conscience conceived as a call to authenticity. No ground for a “should”, according to which, by the very structurality of its being, *Dasein* should haul itself out of its lostness in *das Man* and into its own-most possibility of being, has been identified. The call to authenticity, to self-owning, however, is absent from the vulgar understanding of conscience. For the vulgar understanding, conscience concerns projections, or possible projections, without regard to the mode of being in which they are projected. For the vulgar understanding, conscience concerns inauthentic projections, not inauthenticity as such. The question can thus be rather turned on Heidegger: what reason is there to accept that conscience is originally a call to authenticity, a call out of lostness in *das Man*? What *possible* ground for a “should” could there be when conscience is conceived in this way? In what sense *is there* more to be heard in the call of conscience than its concern for particular deeds?

For Heidegger, as we have seen, conscience is fundamentally *disclosive*; indeed, for him, it is not anything other than a simple disclosive function. Whilst anything that might be perceived to be phenomenologically lacking on this account is supposed to be contributed by the special way in which the call is heard, conscience itself is merely the *Angst*-ful disclosure of the truth of *Dasein*'s being as factual existence, thrown project. The disclosure of the call of conscience does not therefore differentiate itself from the disclosure of the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*. Now the “should” of the conscience call is nothing more than a *structural* relation within existentiality. It can therefore only be grounded, and thus made intelligible, *within* a system of structural relations. Our case against Heidegger's analysis of conscience might thus be distilled like this: Mere disclosure taken alone – nothing here hanging on *what* is disclosed – is not structural; therefore it cannot ground the structural phenomenon of the “should”. And this means that it cannot successfully function alone as an account of conscience, to the very concept of which a “should” belongs.

We can hear an echo here of the traditional is/ought distinction. The “ought”, whether hypothetical or transcendental-categorical, always expresses a relational structure: I ought to do such and such if I want such and such; I ought to do such and such rather than such and such. As such it can only be grounded as some sort of structural relation, whether this is conceived existentially or in terms of pure practical reason. A *brute* fact alone can never provide the structural relation required for an “ought” and thus contain within itself a prescription for action.

Nevertheless, we have been told that *Dasein* is the structural possibility of disclosure. Within this structure, we claim, is to be found the ground of a “should” which determines its essentiality. Demonstrating this requires, however, that we move beyond Heidegger's own analyses.

Dasein is primarily a being-possible [*Seinkönnen*]. It is as a projection onto a possibility of its being for the sake of which it is. Projection is to be conceived in terms of the relation of existentiality and facticity. *Dasein* is this (structural) relation in the ground of its being. *It is this structural relation that grounds the possibility of the "should", and thus of the existential-ontological phenomenon of conscience.* To see this it is helpful to return to Heidegger's analysis of guilt.

Heidegger determines the basic meaning of guilt to be: "*Grundsein einer Nichtigkeit*" and he characterises the being of *Dasein* as essentially being-guilty. Now *Dasein* is, as we have seen, *geworfen*; that is, *Dasein* is its "that it is" without having chosen to be it: 'Existierend kommt es nie hinter seine Geworfenheit zurück, so daß es dieses "daß es ist und zu sein hat" je eigens erst aus *seinem selbstsein* entlassen und in das Da führen könnte.'¹² And this is the basic meaning of the facticity of *Dasein*. *Dasein* is, *not* in virtue of its own doing. Thus this facticity of *Dasein* is essentially determined by a negativity: '*Nicht durch es selbst, sondern an es selbst entlassen aus dem Grunde, um als dieser zu sein.*'¹³ The existentiality of *Dasein* is also essentially determined by a negativity. As the finite projection upon particular existentiell possibilities, *Dasein* is always in the state of *not* having projected onto particular existentiell possibilities – possibilities that it has not chosen. 'Das *Dasein* ist sein Grund existierend, das heißt so, daß es sich aus Möglichkeiten versteht und dergestalt sich verstehend das geworfene Seiende ist. Darin liegt aber: seinkönnend steht es je in der einen oder anderen Möglichkeit, ständig ist es eine andere *nicht* und hat sich ihrer im existenziellen Entwurf begeben. Der Entwurf ist nicht nur als geworfener durch die Nichtigkeit des Grundseins bestimmt, sondern *als Entwurf* selbst wesentlich *nichtig*.'¹⁴

Existentiality and facticity are both determined by negativity. Heidegger concludes: 'In der Struktur der Geworfenheit sowohl wie in der des Entwurfs liegt wesentlich eine Nichtigkeit...*Die Sorge selbst ist in ihrem Wesen durch und durch von Nichtigkeit durchsetzt.* Die Sorge – das Sein des *Daseins* – besagt demnach als geworfener Entwurf: Das (nichtige) Grund-sein einer Nichtigkeit. Und das bedeutet: *Das Dasein ist als solches schuldig.*'¹⁵

However, contrary to what Heidegger claims here, the negativity essential to existentiality, to projection, cannot be grounded in the mere fact that *Dasein* does not choose however many possibilities each time it projects itself. On the one hand, since these possibilities are potentially infinite that would leave *Dasein*'s guilt wholly indeterminate at any time (that is ontically indeterminate, not merely ontologically indeterminate), and, on the other, it equivocates being-guilty with freedom, which is to say with being *responsible* as

¹² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 284

¹³ *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 284-285

¹⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 285

¹⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 285

such.¹⁶ Further, the negativity essential to facticity, to *Geworfenheit*, cannot be limited to the mere fact of not having chosen to exist. Rather, the negativity here, the not-having-chosen, is carried over into every current projection, in so far as, for example, it is the projection of a particular not-chosen body, out of a particular not-chosen family background, against particular not-chosen obstacles in the world, etc. Indeed: the essential negativity of facticity only makes sense in so far as it is considered in reference to projection, whilst the essential negativity of existentiality only makes sense – as we shall now see – in so far as it is considered in reference to *Geworfenheit*. This is because the negativity that determines the phenomenon of guilt is grounded in the relation of existentiality to facticity, that is, in the relation of projection to *Geworfenheit*.

The negativity of guilt concerns the “not” of the possibility projected upon but not *accomplished*, that is, *real-ised*.—Thus not just any possibility that is not projected upon. *Dasein* is guilty in so far as it does not realise, that is, *fails* to realise, a possibility that it projects itself upon. Such failure – failure of existentiality – is made ontologically possible only by the relation of existentiality to facticity. In so far as *Dasein* is factual, its projection is finite, that is, subject to possible failure. Facticity is precisely the determination of the finitude of *Dasein*’s existentiality, that is, of its freedom – and nothing more than this.

Guilt, instantiated as the negativity of the failure of projection, is grounded in the relation of existentiality and facticity, *but only within the structure of the individual project*. Of course, as a being-possible, *Dasein* has *always already* projected itself onto a possibility of its being for the sake of which it is; *Dasein* is *always already* engaged with existentiell projects.

It might be argued at this point that we are confusing the ontic or existentiell with the ontological or existential: whilst Heidegger is concerned with an ontological guilt, we have at the very most affirmed that *Dasein* can be ontically guilty. But we have already pointed out the incoherence of an ontological guilt on the horizon of a consideration of the phenomenon of conscience. Heidegger’s ontological guilt is no different from existential responsibility in general. But this existential responsibility is precisely the ontological fundament of the fact that *Dasein* can be ontically guilty. Guilt and its correlative, innocence, must be understood as ontic phenomena, no matter for their grounding in deeper ontological structures. If not, then the phenomenon of conscience is inexplicable. It is Heidegger who is confusing the ontic and ontological levels. Indeed, he even admits in regard to his analysis of guilt: ‘Die gemeinte Nichtigkeit gehört zum Freisein des Daseins für seine existenziellen

¹⁶ A point brought out by Günter Figal in his *Martin Heidegger: Phänomenologie der Freiheit*, p. 239 ff. The problem here is that guilt has to be different from existential responsibility in general if we are to make sense of the phenomenon of the “should” of the call of conscience.

Möglichkeiten.’¹⁷ The essential negativity of guilt belongs to the existentiell level of projection.

The relation of existentiality to facticity within the individual project grounds the possibility of the guilt of *Dasein*. *Dasein* is guilty in so far as it fails to realise what it projects. But this claim needs to be qualified. Guilt is “Grundsein einer Nichtigkeit”. Failing to realise its project, *Dasein* is guilty in so far as it itself is the *ground* of its failure. Being the ground of its failure implies that *Dasein* “could have” realised its project, that is, that no circumstance in the world made the possibility an impossibility. Guilt concerns *Dasein*’s being as *Seinkönnen*.

If the (ontic) being-guilty of *Dasein* is grounded in the relation of existentiality to facticity within the structure of the individual projection, so is also too the conscience-call and the accompanying “should”. Conscience is not a call to authentic being-guilty; conscience is a call to not being-guilty, that is, to the realisation of projections onto possibilities, which *Dasein* has chosen.¹⁸ Only once understood in this way can sense be made of the “should” that determines the call of conscience. The structurality that determines the possibility of the “should” is the relation of existentiality to facticity within the individual projection. Existentiality is the projection onto a possibility of being; facticity is the finitude of this projection, its susceptibility to failure. The “should” concerns this “failure”. Only where there is a projection can there be a failure; and only then where this projection is finite. The “should” always contains some explicit content. This content concerns the particular projection itself. The “should” therefore corresponds to the projection as such in so far as it is endangered by facticity. If existentiality were infinite, there would be no “should” only a “will”. Kant had seen this already: his categorical imperative determines what a finite or imperfectly rational being “ought” to do, and therefore what an infinite or perfectly rational being – that is, a holy or divine being – “would” do.¹⁹ Only within the structure of a *factual* existential projection can there be something like an ontologically founded “should”.

For Heidegger, conscience is essentially *disclosive*. For him, the call of conscience is no more than the disclosure of the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*. As such, conscience is the disclosure of the truth of the being of *Dasein* – as thrown projection – and thereby of the possibility of its authentic mode of being. As we have now seen, however, such a conception of conscience not only misses the phenomenological facts; it leaves the phenomenon

¹⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 285

¹⁸ The account of conscience developed here avoids the charge levelled by Mulhall against Heidegger’s conception and the related objection we articulated earlier. It is easily explicable how conscience calls when it is understood as simply the structurality of factual projection. Not embedded in an authenticity-inauthenticity dichotomy, conscience does not get covered over; rather, it is simply initialised structurally in the factual failure of existentiality.

essentially unexplained. Nevertheless, conscience – at least in so far as we conceive it as a call – must be disclosive of *something*. Given our analysis of guilt, we can see that rather than conscience being disclosive of the truth of *Dasein's* being, it is disclosive of the chosen individual ontic projection onto the possibility of being that at any time determines *Dasein* existentially. This does not make conscience on our account a phenomenon with a purely ontic explanation; in so far as conscience concerns the fundamental relation of existentiality to facticity, it is to be understood ontologically.

But, one might object, don't conscience and guilt have ultimately to do with morality? If we are going to talk about conscience and guilt at the ontic level, what sense does this make outside of some sort of ethical framework? Whilst many contemporary writers identify "ethics" with "being-with-others", this is an identification not made by many of the great ethicists of the Western tradition. If one understands the most basic ethical question as "How should I live?" rather than "How should I live with others?", where the latter question is subsumed into the former, then our claims concerning conscience and guilt are able to be understood as ethical claims. Heidegger himself was asked on occasion why he never wrote "an ethics".²⁰ His reply would point out that the question is mis-guided: he was concerned with fundamental ontology, which comes before any ethics. However there seems to be no reason why ethics, if one is to take it in its broadest signification – indeed, in its inceptual signification –, should necessarily be an ontic endeavour. In a very important sense *Sein und Zeit* already constitutes an ethics and not merely the ontological *groundwork* for one. It constitutes an ontological-existential ethics of authenticity, of the essential relation to the truth of being as the essentiality of human life. As Heidegger writes: 'Soll nun gemäß der Grundbedeutung des Wortes *ἦθος* der Name Ethik dies sagen, daß sie den Aufenthalt des Menschen bedenkt, dann ist dasjenige Denken das die Wahrheit des Seins als das anfängliche Element des Menschen als eines existierenden denkt, in sich schon die ursprüngliche Ethik.'²¹

At this point we might return to deconstruct Heidegger's account of the origin of the "should" of the call of conscience in the light of our own account. Heidegger's thought is that *Dasein's* concern for its being *as a whole* is sufficient to ground something like the pivotal "should" between the modes of being of authenticity and inauthenticity. We can see now in what sense this *is* the case: if *Dasein* projects itself onto a possibility of being a whole – a career, an ethical principle, etc – then such a projection, like any other projection, will

¹⁹ 'Therefore no imperatives hold for the divine will, and in general for a holy will; the *ought* is here out of place, because the *would* is already of itself necessarily in agreement with the [moral] law.' *Grounding for the Metaphysics of morals*, 414

²⁰ Cf. Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, pp. 353 ff.

structurally ground a “should”, and this “should” will, in at least one respect, concern the possibility of authenticity as against inauthenticity in that it will be essentially related to the *mortality* of *Dasein*. But – and this is what Heidegger misses –: the projection must already be made for the “should” to be grounded. Heidegger has argued that inauthentic *Dasein* does not expressly exist as being towards death. Thus inauthentic *Dasein* does not concern itself with its being as a whole. Why then should it concern itself with pulling its self back together out of its dispersion in *das Man*? It seems that Heidegger’s view implies paradoxically that conscience has always already been understood before it has been heard, that is, understood. And this is tantamount to saying that Heidegger leaves the phenomenon of conscience unexplained.

²¹ Brief über den Humanismus, *Wegmarken*, p. 356 Haar insists (cf. p. 90, *The Song of the Earth*) that Heidegger’s reflections on how it is possible to live authentically within a technological world most certainly amount to an ethics.

Chapter 14:

Resoluteness

We do not wish to deny Heidegger's claim that conscience is a call to resoluteness; but we understand and explicate these phenomena in a contrastive way. Conscience is the structural call of existentiality and facticity. Resoluteness, it may be expected, must also concern the structurality of existentiality and facticity.

Projection within the factual world is always subject to possible failure. The ground of any such failure can lie with factors in the world over which *Dasein* has no influence, that means, for which *Dasein* bears no existential responsibility. It can also lie with *Dasein* itself, particularly in so far as *Dasein* is determined by *Befindlichkeit* and, perhaps most importantly of all, by a body – which can tire, become ill, etc. *Dasein* itself can be the ground of the failure of its projections. The dividing line here is, of course, for essential reasons, not clearly defined and will, in any particular case, and on the basis of all manner of factors, be subject to interpretation. But it is not important to present here criteria of definition or such like, were that possible; for our purposes suffices merely the recognition that the two states of affairs are both conceivable.

Resoluteness is to be understood in terms of *Dasein*'s accomplishment, or better, realisation of its project in the face of factors over which it has influence – for which it bears existential responsibility – and which are potential grounds of the failure of its project. Such resoluteness is demanded by the call of conscience. Conscience is the structural call of existentiality and facticity; it has to do with the *interrelation* of the bifold configuration of existentiality and facticity. Central to the understanding of this call is the notion of guilt – *Grundsein einer Nichtigkeit*. The *Nichtigkeit* here is the failure of the existential projection. Such failure is necessarily rooted in the facticity that determines existentiality, the finitude that determines projection. *Dasein* is guilty in so far as it is the ground of the failure of its existential projection. Conscience, as a call to not being guilty, is thus a call to resoluteness, as the determination of the existentiality of *Dasein* whereby *Dasein* does not, to put it in the

vernacular, “give in” to its facticity, does not surrender its projection to its finitude, but is the ground of the realisation of its projection.

We saw that Heidegger defined resoluteness as a mode of disclosure (*Entschlossenheit*¹); namely, that mode of disclosure in which the essence of *Dasein*’s being as *Sorge*, as factual existence lost in *das Man*, is revealed to *Dasein*. Such disclosure, we are told, has within it the essential tendency to concern itself with the utmost possibility of the non-being of *Dasein*, of its death, and thus the essential tendency to *Vorlaufen* towards death. The disclosure of resoluteness, essentially tending to authentic being towards death, is thus, for Heidegger, the disclosure of the truth of being as such. In contrast to this claim we maintain that resoluteness is *not* the disclosure of the truth of being as such. But it is, nevertheless, a mode of disclosure.

If resoluteness is to be understood in terms of the relation of existentiality and facticity within a particular project, it amounts, as a form of projective understanding, to a mode of the disclosure of that project. Resoluteness is thus a mode of the disclosure of particular, that is, individual projects. It is not the disclosure of factual existence as such; it is rather merely the disclosure of the particular facticity as *Geworfenheit* and the particular existentiality as projection [*Entwurf*] that together determine a particular project as such.

The ontological constitution of *Dasein* is *Sorge*, the structural configuration of existentiality, facticity and *Verfallen*. Resoluteness and conscience concern the relation that holds between existentiality and facticity, that is, are essential determinations of this relation which pertains at *Dasein*’s structural nucleus. The call of conscience is grounded structurally by the relating of existentiality to facticity; it is a call to resoluteness. Therefore resoluteness defines what we are entitled to call the *essential* relation of existentiality and facticity. Just as for Heidegger as for us, *conscience is a call to essentiality*, to the essentiality of the relation of existentiality and facticity. But the structural relation of existentiality and facticity forms the ontological constitution of *Dasein*. Thus conscience is the call to the *essentiality of Dasein*; that is, the call calling *Dasein* to exist according to its essence. This essentiality is to be understood as resoluteness.

In all of this we agree with Heidegger, only we understand conscience and resoluteness – thus the call to essentiality and this essentiality itself – differently. Crucially,

¹ The prefix “*ent-*” in German can either negate the word it prefixes (as in *ent-decken*) or imply an *intensification*. Charles E. Scott claims, in an article concerning the question of ethics in Heidegger’s thought (Chapter 10 of *Heidegger toward the Turn*, ed. Risser), that this ambiguity allows Heidegger to change the meaning of *Entschlossenheit* from “closure” to openness. In fact this is false, since the original meaning of *Entschließen* was *Aufschließen*, to unlock. We can see this in the English *resoluteness* too, which comes from the Latin *resolutus*, past participle of *resolvere*, to unbind, loosen, open. However, the phenomenology of the matter in question could lead one to emphasise either meaning. If one is resolute no doubt one closes off all possibilities other than that resolved upon, but on the other hand one no doubt therefore also opens up that possibility, or opens oneself up for it, unlocks it for existential projection.

for us, conscience and resoluteness are not to be defined on the horizon of the distinction between authenticity and inauthenticity as the two fundamental modes of existence. For Heidegger, resoluteness is the essential determination of authenticity, of *Dasein* existing as its self. For him, *Dasein* is structurally determined ontologically such that, initially and for the most part, it exists in the mode of inauthenticity, absorbed among inner-worldly beings, lost to the self of *das Man*. This, it must be remembered, belongs to its determination as original temporality. *Verfallen* – the ground of inauthenticity – corresponds to the temporal ecstasy of the present. Temporality can, of course, also be authentic; but this amounts merely to a modification of the *Verfallen* which *Dasein* always already is, not to its jettisoning or overcoming. The authentic present is, as we have seen, the *Augenblick*. It discloses the (inner-worldly) *Situation*. We want to say that *Dasein* can be equally resolute in the mode of being of inauthenticity. For resoluteness has to do merely with the structure of the individual projection, not with whether that projection is a projection onto *Dasein's own-most* possibility or not. This is not to say that in general *Dasein* will be resolute in the mode of being of inauthenticity; only that there is in principle this possibility. No doubt, if we accept Heidegger's analyses in this respect, *Dasein* is likely to project resolutely onto its own-most possibility precisely because it understands this possibility as such and it is concerned about its being, and thus in general authenticity and resoluteness will tend to come together. But this is no *necessity* of the ontological constitution of *Dasein*. *Dasein* can equally well project irresolutely in the mode of being of authenticity. This is possible because resoluteness does not have to do with the disclosure of *Dasein's* finite being as such, but rather with the disclosure of the individual project. Inauthentic projection can be resolute; authentic projection can be irresolute.

That this is in fact the case can be made transparently clear by illustration. My own-most possibility of being – or one of my own-most possibilities of being – might, for example, expressly concern my physical fitness. Despite this possibility being understood as such and being expressly projected upon in the light of my finite existence, I can still fail to remain as physically fit as I want to, purely out of laziness, that is, out of grounds that are, in the last instance, determined by me. Equally, I can project myself resolutely onto a possibility of being determined by the self of *das Man*: that of winning a running race in order to impress friends could be an example.

From this perspective our internal critique of Heidegger's philosophy can be understood as an attack on the thought that authenticity, as the disclosure of finite existence as such, is the determination of the essence of *Dasein*. The essence, or rather, the essentiality of *Dasein*, does consist in its resoluteness – that is necessary given the structure of its ontological constitution –, but resoluteness does not map directly onto an authentic mode of being, and this is because it is not ontologically grounded in an authentic mode of being.

Having said this, however, it might be argued that in so far as *Dasein's* being is essentially determined by *Verfallen*, any sort of existentiell projection in the mode of being of authenticity is impossible. Disclosure in the mode of being of authenticity is determined by the basic *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*. In the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, world is disclosed – understood – as being without *Bedeutsamkeit*, that is, as *meaningless*. Heidegger writes:

Das Wovor der Angst ist kein innerweltliches Seiendes. Daher kann es damit wesentlich keine Bewandnis haben...Das Wovor der Angst ist völlig unbestimmt. Diese Unbestimmtheit läßt nicht nur faktisch unentschieden, welches innerweltliche Seiende droht, sondern besagt, daß überhaupt das innerweltliche Seiende nicht "relevant" ist. Nichts von dem, was innerhalb der Welt zuhanden und vorhanden ist, fungiert als das, wovor die Angst sich ängstet. Die innerweltlich entdeckte Bewandnisganzheit des Zuhandenen und Vorhandenen ist als solche überhaupt ohne Belang. Sie sinkt in sich zusammen. Die Welt hat den Charakter völliger Unbedeutsamkeit.²

If the world is without meaning, *Dasein* is without projective understanding onto a possibility of its being. If the disclosure of the mode of being of authenticity is determined by the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, therefore, it is unclear how *Dasein* could project at all in this mode of being, let alone project resolutely.³ That the world is meaningless precisely implies that *Dasein* does not project, since projection, for Heidegger, is what founds and structures meaning. Projection is just the meaning-structure of the world. Meaning is always in relation to a for-the-sake-of-which. The projected possibility of the being of *Dasein* structures the world in terms of *Bewandnis* relations. This is what Heidegger intends by characterising the existential of understanding as projective. In the absence of meaning, there is no projection. But in the absence of projection, there is certainly no resolute projection.

Verfallen is the flight of *Angst*, we have been told; is grounded by *Angst*. *Dasein* flees the uncanny disclosure of its being into the familiarity of the world. As such, *Verfallen* is itself the ground of the structure of the world as *Bedeutsamkeit*. It is therefore also the ground of the understanding of *Dasein*, of *Dasein's* existential projection. Ultimately, it is the ground of the determination of *Dasein* as being-in-the-world. It is also the existential corresponding to the temporal ecstasy of the present. The mode of being of authenticity, then, can, it would seem, no less be determined by *Verfallen* than the mode of being of inauthenticity. As we cited above, 'die eigentliche Existenz [ist] nichts, was über der verfallenden Alltäglichkeit schwebt, sondern existenzial nur ein modifiziertes Ergreifen

² *Sein und Zeit*, p. 186

³ A point also noted by Michel Haar in his *Heidegger and the Essence of Man* (pp. 24 and 49-50), where the solution is to claim that the loss of meaning only affects the self *das Man*. This flatly contradicts the texts. Loss of meaning is integral to the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*: only on this basis can it be supposed to function as the disclosure of the truth of being.

dieser.’⁴ Our complaint would then be that therefore it cannot be based upon the uncanny disclosure of *Angst*.

Of course, Heidegger recognises that authentic projection cannot be detached from the world. He writes for example:

Die Entschlossenheit löst als *eigentliches Selbstsein* das Dasein nicht von seiner Welt ab, isoliert es nicht auf ein freischwebendes Ich. Wie sollte sie das auch – wo sie doch als eigentliche Erschlossenheit nichts anderes als das *In-der-Welt-sein eigentlich* ist. Die Entschlossenheit bringt das Selbst gerade in das jeweilige besorgende Sein bei Zuhandenem und stößt es in das fürsorgende Mitsein mit den Anderen.⁵

And:

Auch der Entschluß bleibt auf das Man und seine Welt angewiesen. Das zu verstehen, gehört mit zu dem, was er erschließt, sofern die Entschlossenheit erst dem Dasein die eigentliche Durchsichtigkeit gibt. In der Entschlossenheit geht es dem Dasein um sein eigenstes Seinkönnen, das als geworfenes nur auf bestimmte faktische Möglichkeiten sich entwerfen kann. Der entschluß entzieht sich nicht der “Wirklichkeit”, sondern entdeckt erst das faktisch Mögliche, so zwar, daß er es dergestalt, wie es als eigenstes Seinkönnen im Man möglich ist, ergreift.⁶

If we accept that the authentic mode of disclosure is determined by the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, which uncovers the world as ultimately without existentiell meaning, these remarks would appear incoherent.

What we have touched on here is in fact a network of problems at the heart of Heidegger’s distinction between the authentic and the inauthentic modes of being. Given that *Dasein*’s being is ontologically determined by an absorption in the world, which itself delineates its basic structure as temporality, it is hard to see in what sense the authentic mode of being can amount to the disclosure of the truth of *Dasein*’s factual existence to itself. Essentially determined as *Verfallen*, how can *Dasein* retreat the necessary distance for the world as such to come into view? And if it can, hasn’t it then shed all its existentiality, that is, its projective understanding? In any case, the possibility of resoluteness, the essentiality of the ontological constitution of *Dasein* as *Sorge*, the structural unity of existence, facticity and *Verfallen*, does not rest on the disclosure of the truth of the being of *Dasein*.

Now, this implies that there is no claim [*Anspruch*], no demand [*Forderung*], grounded in the ontological structure of *Dasein*, calling *Dasein* to an essential relation to the

⁴ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 179 My italics.

⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 298

truth of being, where this essential relation is to be conceived in terms of the disclosure of the truth of being, of the thinking or *Besinnung* of the truth of being, of the unconcealment of the truth of being. If resoluteness, as the essentiality of the being of *Dasein*, is to be conceived as a relation to being – and we will leave this thought out of focus –, then it is not to be conceived as a relation of *disclosure*, i. e. it is not to be conceived as a relation to the *truth* of being. Lacking express disclosure of the truth of being, *Dasein* can nevertheless resolve. Such resolution can be understood as a mode of disclosure, but only as a mode of disclosure of a particular project. Resoluteness concerns the way in which an individual project is understood.

Closely related to the disclosure of the truth of being is, however, for Heidegger, the existential phenomenon of death. We have seen the sense in which this is the case. We have also seen the way in which he associates resoluteness with authentic being towards death. Resoluteness is only authentically and completely what it is in so far as it is *Vorlaufen* towards death and therefore holds the tendency to authentic being towards death within itself: ‘Die Entschlossenheit wird eigentlich das, was sie sein kann, *als verstehendes Sein zum Ende*, d. h. als *Vorlaufen in den Tod*. Die Entschlossenheit “hat” nicht lediglich einen Zusammenhang mit dem Vorlaufen als einem anderen ihrer selbst. *Sie birgt das eigentliche Sein zum Tode in sich als die mögliche existenzielle Modalität ihrer eigenen Eigentlichkeit.*’⁷ Crucially, this implies that the call of conscience is not merely to be understood as a call to authenticity, but also as a call to *Vorlaufen* towards death. ‘Das Vorlaufen “ist” nicht als freischwebende Verhaltung, sondern muß begriffen werden als *die in der existenziell bezeugten Entschlossenheit verborgene und sonach mitbezeugte Möglichkeit ihrer Eigentlichkeit*. Das eigentliche “Denken an den Tod” ist das existenziell sich durchsichtig gewordene Gewissen-haben-wollen.’⁸ And thus the call of conscience is to be understood as a call to an essential disclosive relation to the truth of being.

In chapter 12 we outlined the grounds of the connection that Heidegger draws between death and resoluteness. In denying that resoluteness is the disclosure of the truth of being it is incumbent upon us to sever this connection. For us, resoluteness does not stand in the relation to death that Heidegger advocates.

Heidegger argues that resoluteness is essentially the projection onto a constant being-guilty, which, implying an “until the end” of *Dasein*, is thus to be understood as tending to *Vorlaufen* towards death, and that this is so in so far as resoluteness is the disclosive understanding of the truth of *Dasein*’s finite existence. On our analysis, in contrast, resoluteness is merely the disclosive understanding of the particular possibility onto which

⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 299

⁷ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 305

⁸ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 309

Dasein has resolutely projected itself, whether this is grounded in the disclosure of the truth of existence or not. For this account resolute projection can only be conceived as a projection upon an “until the end” if this is envisaged in terms of the individual project, rather than in terms of *Dasein*’s existence as such. In fact, resoluteness is certainly a projection “until the end” – and Heidegger has seen something essential here –, but this end is not the end of *Dasein* itself; it is merely the end of the particular project onto which *Dasein* has resolutely projected – that is, its *realisation*.

Heidegger also argues that since resoluteness is authentic projection upon being-guilty and since authentic projection is essentially determined by *Vorlaufen* towards death as the utmost possibility of *Dasein*, the resolute projection upon being-guilty must be qualified as *Vorlaufen* towards death. However, is it the case that resoluteness is a projection upon being-guilty? As we have seen, guilt is not to be conceived as an ontological determination of *Dasein* if indeed it is to be distinguished from responsibility or freedom. The guilt involved in *Dasein*’s resolute projection concerns, rather, merely the possibility of the failure of the particular projection. Resoluteness is not a projection upon being-guilty but upon a particular factual possibility of the being of *Dasein*, and this projection can be determined as either authentic or inauthentic.

Heidegger further argues that it is only with the possibility of death, the possibility of the non-being of *Dasein*, that the non-being, the nothingness that is the essence of *Dasein*’s being as being-guilty is revealed for what it is. *Dasein* could then only fully understandingly project itself upon its being-guilty, that is, resolve, in so far as it is *Vorlaufen* towards death. But, on the one hand, as we have just pointed out, resoluteness is not to be conceived as a projection upon being-guilty, and on the other, the nothingness that concerns guilt, the possibility of the failure of a particular projection, is essentially different from the nothingness of being towards death as the possible non-being of *Dasein*. There is no reason to suppose that the nothingness of the individual factual project, which is after all only to be determined as nothingness *relative* to the realisation of the individual factual project, is only revealed for what it is in the light of the *absolute* nothingness of the non-being of *Dasein* in death.

In terms of its existential structure death is to be conceived as “*die eigenste, unbezügliche, unüberholbare Möglichkeit*” which is *certain* but nevertheless *indeterminate*. We have seen Heidegger claim that resoluteness tends to authentic being towards death in so far as it correlates with this structure of the possibility of death. We can now show how this is not the case. Resoluteness does not concern the individuation of *Dasein* out of the self of *das Man*, since the call of conscience, as the call to resoluteness, is not the call to authenticity, but merely to the resolute projection upon a factual possibility. It does not therefore correspond to the “own-most”, “non-relational” possibility of death. However, whilst the call

of conscience does not disclose an ontological being-guilty of *Dasein*, and therefore, at the same time its un-by-passability, as Heidegger claims, it does disclose the un-by-passability of the demand that the call of conscience places on the factual existentiality of *Dasein*. But this is not enough to ground any significant correlation with the existential structure of the possibility of death.

As far as certainty and indeterminacy are concerned, in so far as they characterise the possibility of death, any parallel to resolute projection can be dismissed straightway, since, on the one hand, the certainty of the possibility of death, the certainty *that Dasein* will die, is not at all the same as the possible existential certainty of *Dasein's* existentiell projection, the certainty that it has projected itself upon the "right" possibility, and, on the other hand, the indeterminacy of the possibility of death, the indeterminacy of *when Dasein* will die, is not at all the same as the basic indeterminacy of the existentiell projection of *Dasein*, the indeterminacy of *what Dasein* is to project upon, contrary to what Heidegger claims.

Resoluteness does not stand in the particular essential connection to the possibility of death which Heidegger advocates. By Heidegger's lights, this implies that it does not stand in essential relation to the truth of being.⁹

Now it could be argued that symptomatic of Heidegger's mis-construal of resoluteness is his failure to adequately incorporate corporeality into his ontology.¹⁰ This is a delicate point that needs to be treated carefully and we have little space to do that here. Whilst Heidegger admits that *Dasein* is corporeal, the meaning and implications of this issue are nowhere pursued.¹¹ In what sense is *Dasein* corporeal?

⁹ One might claim that in so far as we deny the intrinsic relation of resoluteness to the possibility of death we make inexplicable how resoluteness can determine ontic projections, for, is it not requisite for ontic projections to *matter*, that is, be resolved upon, that they stand in the light, so to speak, of death? We deny this last dependency: for ontic projections to matter requires only that they be projected upon. Mattering is intrinsic to projection, that is, existentiality; there cannot be projection in the absence of mattering; but nevertheless there is projection in the absence of disclosure of the existential possibility of death. It may be true that projection upon a particular project concerning the whole life-time of the individual will be made in the light of this possibility, but this would be merely a special case. There are no grounds for generalisation from this particular instance to all projection as such. Mattering comes essentially independently of the possibility of death.

¹⁰ For further discussion of this oft-raised issue see in particular Michel Haar's examination in *The Song of the Earth*; also: Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, Part 1; Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, Part 3, Chapter 2. The relation of Sartrean freedom to the concept of resoluteness is especially problematic, something which causes Sartre's theory to effectively unravel. I have discussed this issue elsewhere (*Will-power in Sartre's Theory of Freedom*, UCLA Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 1).

This issue is also closely related to Heidegger's rejection of what one might call the *animality* of mankind. Is it really acceptable to purge corporeal mankind of his animality to the extent that he becomes separated from animals by an "abyss of essence"? Is mankind really closer to the gods? Caputo brings this objection out well in his *Demythologizing Heidegger*, pp. 122 ff. For him it is a question of *discrimination* against the animal (amongst other things). See also Derrida's *Of Spirit*, Chapter 6.

¹¹ See, for example, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 108 where Heidegger notes that the corporeality of *Dasein* points to problematics with which he is not concerned.

Dasein is never a mere body of the mode of being of *Vorhandenheit*.¹² Its corporeality is wholly determined by existentiality. To use Sartre's phrase, *Dasein* exists its body. But *Dasein* is the structurality that first makes disclosure possible. The body is implicated in this structurality, not only as the site of disclosure, its locality, and also not simply – in so far as disclosure is always spatial – as the determination of its perspective; it is also, of course, the seat of our sensory being-in-the-world. Levinas complains that *Dasein* doesn't have any eyes. We might also query whether *Dasein* is genuinely capable of pain. Or perhaps of fatigue. Indeed, we might finally ask whether *Dasein* is actually capable of *living*, of being alive? – Would not this bear on its essential determination of the possibility of death? For Heidegger does not treat these determinations; they play no role in his existential analysis. This would apparently be because he does not, in the last analysis, consider the body to be an *existential*.—

However, corporeality seems to be the primary expression of *Dasein's* facticity.¹³ Whilst the body is the vehicle of all action, of all existentiality, it is also its primary limitation. The body hurts, gets tired, ill, broken. It is perhaps the most basic dimension of *Dasein's* *Befindlichkeit*. But in so far as disclosure is only possible within the structurality of the relation of existentiality to facticity, corporeality must function as a condition of possibility of disclosure, and must surely therefore be categorised as an existential.

¹² Despite being so etymologically concerned, Heidegger does not pursue the obvious corporeal associations of his central twin categories *Zuhandenheit* and *Vorhandenheit*. Given that the latter at least is, so we are told, the basic determination of the metaphysical understanding of being, is its connection to "*Hand*" not of the utmost importance? Does it not ground the idea that *Dasein's* engagement in the world is determined wholly by its corporeality? In so far as beings show up only within structures of *usefulness*, and usefulness stands in much more than an etymological connection to corporeality, does it not ground the claim that beings can be disclosed for *Dasein* only in so far as *Dasein* is *bodily*? As a condition of the possibility of disclosure, the body would surely then have to be conceived as an existential.—

(But note this passage about hands: 'Allein das Wesen der Hand läßt sich nie als ein leibliches Greiforgan bestimmen oder von diesem her erklären. Greiforgane besitzt z. B. der Affe, aber er hat keine Hand. Die Hand ist von allen Greiforganen: Tatzen, Krallen, Fängen, unendlich, d. h. durch einen Abgrund des Wesens verschieden. Nur ein Wesen, das spricht, d. h. denkt, kann die Hand haben und in der Handhabung Werke der Hand vollbringen.' [*Was Heißt Denken?*, p. 51])

¹³ With this claim we are at odds with Haar's conclusion. He claims that: 'The body is nothing but one manifestation *among others* of facticity or Geworfenheit, "thrownness".' [*The Song of the Earth*, p. 36] But is it not rather the case that the body is, as it were, the very embodiment of facticity? Existentiality and facticity stand in relation to one another in the same way as the traditional categories of soul and body, freedom and nature (the latter dichotomy providing the title for an important book from Paul Ricoeur on precisely this issue). The body is the locus, the gathering point of facticity, as the channel of existentiality. Haar also claims that 'transcendence like the other existentials such as attunement (*Stimmung*) and "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*) – both permeated with transcendence – are structures more *original than the body*.' [*The Song of the Earth*, p. 35] What "more original" might mean in this context is unclear. Transcendence, the opening up of the world, ek-sistence, after all clearly has corporeality as its locus in that *Dasein* can only occupy a "position" in the world at all in so far as it is a body. Must not corporeality at least be equi-primordial [*gleichursprünglich*] with transcendence? Is it going too far to say that the body is what makes existentiality and facticity possible in the first place?

In so far as resoluteness denotes the essentiality of this structural relation, however, it must fundamentally implicate bodily being. Indeed, corporeality grounds the possibility of something like resolute existentiality in so far as projection is fundamentally and primarily limited by the finitude of the body. This is perhaps most clearly seen in the context of the existentiality of athletics, which is precisely to be determined in terms of the basic project of minimising corporeal limitation.¹⁴ In so far as corporeality is basic to the proper thematisation of resoluteness we are justified in pointing out that Heidegger's hiatus stands in direct correlation with his misrepresentation of the phenomenon of resoluteness.

To end this chapter we wish to draw attention to one of the more significant consequences of the conception of resoluteness that we have here outlined. We noted in the last chapter that conscience and guilt are usually understood to have a moral application, and we suggested that even their role within the existential analysis of fundamental ontology can be understood to be an ethical one – as long as “ethical” here is understood in sufficient breadth. But conscience and guilt, we saw, receive their sense in relation to projection, in relation to resoluteness. Can resoluteness also be understood ethically?

Implicated in the phenomena of conscience and guilt, resoluteness is at least to be understood normatively. Resoluteness is *demanded* by the structures that make resoluteness possible. Indeed, as the normativity attaching to the structures which themselves constitute the arena within which something like normativity is first possible, the norm of resoluteness *undercuts* every other form of normativity, that is, every other moral imperative, whether that be of universalisation, of utility, or of the infinite “height” of the “Other”. Since resoluteness is demanded by the structures that first constitute the moral agent, the moral agent is always in the first place bound to this demand before any other normative principle – universalisation, for example – can get a normative grip, so to speak. The relationship to Kant's thinking is interesting since Kant too understood that normativity must be constituted by the structures that comprise the moral agent. In the demand for resoluteness, however, there is no further demand for universalisation or treating others as ends in themselves; that is, there is no implicated demand of *reason*. This connection to Kant's moral theory is pursued further in the following chapter.

It cannot be denied that understanding normativity in this way leads to an extreme form of *relativism*: every normative demand – at least at the existential level – is constituted relative to the particular projection of the individual. Importantly, though, this is not to say

¹⁴ That the phenomenon of sport has yet to become an important theme of social theory let alone of the central areas of contemporary philosophy is lacunar, especially when one considers that arguably sport – at least in the modern sense – was developed by the Greeks at the very beginning of Western history. That sport, and the related concept of *competition*, was of such importance to Greek culture is, of course, no arbitrary fact. Sport belonged *essentially* to the Greek *world*, as Heidegger might have expressed it.

that there is no existential normativity at all. If we want to understand ethics in general in this way then norms of inter-subjectivity will have to be grounded on this basic form of normativity, which means that deeds involving others will only be ethically evaluable in terms of the individual's particular projection. Such a radical relativism constitutes the basis of no argument against the conception of existentiality developed here; indeed, it could just as well count to its favour given the apparent absence within our globalised society of a concurrence of normative demands at a general level.

Chapter 15:

Deciding the Destiny of Historical Humanity

The aim of our final chapter is to draw out the consequences of our critique of the existential analysis, both for Heidegger's philosophy as a whole and more generally. We have shown how Heidegger's philosophy revolves around, and is premised upon, an onto-normativity¹; a normativity that pertains just in so far as the structures of being pertain, a normativity that pertains to the structures of being themselves. We have seen what colossal weight Heidegger lays to rest on this onto-normativity: the essence of historical mankind as such. And thus we have glimpsed the vertiginous depth and the massive scale of Heidegger's philosophical motivation. But we have also seen how, by its own lights, Heidegger's attempt to ground this onto-normativity falters. Disclosure of the truth of being cannot be the ontological imperative; rather, the demand of being stretches only so far as the particular existential projection. The force of this demand is thereby not at all lost; only its claim is concentrated, focused; its extent is contracted.

It might be wondered whether we are entitled to use the term "normativity" within this context? We can do so only by analogy. An onto-normativity is not at all the same as what has been traditionally understood as an ethical normativity. We do not want to say that it has to do with the moral categories of good-bad/evil, right-wrong, even though it may, upon further analysis, form the ground for an ethical investigation. Nor is it at all the same as any normativity of political law or any other preceptive dimension. But nevertheless a *demand*, a *claim*, we might even say an *order*, pertains to it in a way analogous to that considered to pertain to mere ethical or political normativity. Of course, it functions at a deeper level than these. For its ground is the abyss, the *Ab-grund*, the groundlessness that is being itself. Its claim, then, is ultimate, final, absolute. His own ontological constitution stands as a legislator over mankind.

¹ Zimmerman calls it a "cosmic obligation". *Eclipse of the Self*, p. xxx

In the foregoing exposition we have sometimes run together three semantically different claims of Heidegger's: firstly, the claim that the demand of being concerns the essence, or, better, the *essentiality* of historical mankind; secondly, the claim that it concerns the *disclosure* of the truth of being; thirdly, the claim that it concerns the essential *relation* to being as such in its truth. Of course, these three claims amount to the same for Heidegger. To exist in essential relation to the truth of being, to exist as the guardian, the shepherd of being, amounts simply to the disclosure – grounded in *Sorge* – of being as such. And the essentiality of historical mankind consists, for Heidegger, precisely in this essential relation to the truth of being. We, of course, wish to deny the claim that being demands a disclosive relation to its truth on the part of mankind. The structurality of the relation of man and being that Heidegger outlines as his analysis of *Dasein*, the site wherein that relation subsists, does not ground such a claim. Nevertheless, we do not wish to deny that the demand of being is precisely a call to *esse*-nce. Ontological normativity is tautologically the demand to exist within essentiality. Essentiality, that is, being within essence, could not amount to something other than that which an onto-normativity demands. Resoluteness is the essentiality of the structures of existence.

We shall now proceed to outline the consequences of our objection. In so far as it is taken as an objection constituted internally to Heidegger's philosophy such consequences will concern only that philosophy itself. But our claims can also be conceded beyond the horizon of Heidegger's thinking and their repercussions will accordingly be of wider import. We should report, however, that we do not take ourselves to have tilled enough philosophical ground around Heidegger's edifice to legitimate an external reading. Nevertheless, were such a reading legitimated, its consequences would be found interesting.

In the first place: what is to become of the history of being? The crucial concepts of the danger, of the need, and thus of the other beginning are without foundation in the absence of an onto-normative demand for the disclosure of the truth of being. For the danger threatens the essence of mankind only in so far as it is his essence to exist in disclosive relation to being as such. Accordingly, the need amounts to no need at all, no need of the essence of mankind. And on what basis can the other beginning be hoped for if there is no claim of being to inaugurate it? Technology, then, despite all its horrors and uncertainties, does not threaten the essence of man. – Rather: mankind himself, and the environment in which he dwells, is all that the capacities of technology threaten. And we might think that that is dangerous enough! At least it is a danger more tangible; one about which something might actually be *done*; a danger that mankind himself can take responsibility for.

Further, the overcoming of metaphysics turns out to be unmotivated. In the absence of an onto-normative grounding, the turn away from metaphysical thinking beyond the limits of metaphysical language towards the mute *Besinnung* of *Ereignis* appears unjustified. If no

grounds are presented for the wholesale abandonment of the conceptuality of metaphysics apart from those pertaining to a misconstrued essentiality of historical mankind then we are left with no incentive to take such a historical leap. But without the overcoming of metaphysics, without the other beginning, the bipartite structure of the history of being collapses. And apart from this structure, what ground is there to understand history as the history of *being*?—

History can only be justifiably understood as the history of being in so far as it is constituted by the *movements* of being, by the *story* [*Geschichte*] of being, by being's withdrawal from, and eschatological return to, mankind. If there is no other beginning to hope for, no return of being, if being must always veil itself from man, if there is no dynamism to the relationship of man and being, no *Seinsverlassenheit* and therefore no *Seinsvergessenheit*, if the metaphysical epoch is the one unending epoch, then it is with no justification that we can describe history as the history of being. In this case, technological history is only attributable to man. Man alone is accountable. But that does not imply that there could be any alternative to such history if the structures of metaphysical thinking prove finally unassailable.²

² This thought connects up with a number of interrelated objections, two of which we have mentioned before. In the first part we noted that Guzzoni points to an ambiguity within Heidegger's philosophy of the history of being as to whether it is merely preparatory, and therefore provisional, or whether it is supposed to amount to the thinking of being as such, in which case the other beginning would seem to have already taken place. We have also seen that questions surround the possibility of a non-metaphysical language capable of saying the truth of being; Heidegger seems to admit that saying the truth of being amounts to silence, a non-saying. These two points have to do with the basic question as to whether, by his own lights, Heidegger is able to *think* the truth of being at all. Two further forms of this worry are as follows. On the one hand, there is an existential version, to which we have also already alluded, that queries whether, if *Dasein*'s understanding is always projective onto possibilities of its being, an understanding of the truth of being is possible at all; for what sort of projection would it amount to? Heidegger apparently admits that in the *Befindlichkeit* of *Angst*, that *Befindlichkeit* which is supposed to accompany disclosure of the truth of being, all existential meaning – and thus surely understanding – dissolves. On the other hand, there is a hermeneutic version. Here the thought is that since Heidegger has given an account of the conditions of understanding which emphasises its essential facticity, situatedness, finitude, any ultimate claims about reality are ruled out from the start. But what is the thinking of the truth of being if not an ultimate claim about reality?

Considering these in reverse order, it is not difficult to see that the hermeneutic version assesses Heidegger according to the standard of truth as correctness, and therefore begs the question concerning metaphysical modes of thought. That understanding is always partial – in both senses of the word – does not mean that the truth of being is inaccessible, even if it does mean that some ultimate description of reality is impossible. For the truth of being concerns the truth of our *Dasein*, our existence, the essentiality of our being; Heidegger never thought that he was giving some sort of final description of how things actually are beyond our representations of them.

The existential version is not so easily dismissed. It is tied to the fact that Heidegger is unable to provide us with authentic existentiell directives for comportment. If all understanding is projective, then all understanding is, at one level, existentiell; but how can the disclosure of the truth of being be projective in this sense. Existentiality cannot be uprooted from the particularity of projection. This, of course, connects with the primary objection that we have developed. We take it to point to an ineradicable tension within Heidegger's existentialism.

As to the linguistic version, this only amounts to an objection of inconsistency if one takes Heidegger to be giving a final account of the truth of being, rather than merely being suggestive, poetic, evocative. He always insisted, after all, that he was only *unterwegs*, on the way. The final

Finally, what is to become of the raising of the question of being? According to Heidegger, we are to attribute historical necessity to such an undertaking, but only in so far as such necessity is onto-normatively grounded. In the absence of such grounding, the whole enterprise is philosophically unmotivated. But, of course, Heidegger's entire philosophy understands itself as purely the raising of the question of being. The most significant task of *Sein und Zeit*, undoubtedly, was to demonstrate the onto-normative grounds for this world-historical event. But if no such grounding is possible then the whole venture proves arbitrary – by its own lights. We take this to be a finally decisive objection against the entire Heideggerian enterprise. With his invocation of a more primordial truth Heidegger has even denied himself the normativity that pertains to correctness. Beyond the truth of metaphysical thinking there does not appear to be any arbiter for philosophy at all.

In the case of the existential analysis, the phenomenological investigation into the structure of being, the analytical concepts themselves to a certain extent survive despite the collapse of the architectonic within which they will perform such an important role. As the prolegomenon to the raising of the question of being, the existential analysis contains much that is, at least in principle, conceptually severable from that project. The conclusion that time is reducible to the temporality that constitutes existentiality, for example, might be thought to be a consequential philosophical result in its own right; as might the devolution of metaphysical categories such as the will and the understanding into existential structuralities. Nevertheless the significance with which Heidegger himself invests these outcomes is wholly enmeshed with the attempt to ground the basic project of raising the question of being and thus they cannot be simply plucked out of Heidegger's texts without undergoing *essential* alteration.

In the first place, the substructural co-ordinating concept of *Dasein* can fulfil no function beyond the horizon of the question of being. For its meaning as the site of the

destination was, we may suppose, unreachable in principle. But a more important objection underlies this one. Is the truth of being even *thinkable*? Is there any way we can operate outside the boundaries of metaphysical thinking in such a way as to not be caught up in nonsense? How can we even be evocative where the subject-predicate schema is wholly divorced from the subject-object constellation? It is not, of course, as if Heidegger did not attempt to address these worries; only that any response he makes as to the possibility of non-metaphysical thinking, non-metaphysical discourse, if it is not straightway to be dismissed as nonsense, pre-supposes his conclusion.

Finally, as to Guzzoni's charge of ambiguity within the philosophy of the history of being, it must be remembered that the supposed grounds of Heidegger's thinking of the truth of being are apophatic; as Heidegger insists: the experience of *Seinsvergessenheit*, the *forgettleness* of being, is what grounds the project of raising the question of being, raising being to its truth. But there is nothing within the conceptuality of the history of being which would occlude such an experience of *Seinsvergessenheit*; indeed, Heidegger explicitly accounts for this possibility in so far as he shows that the danger of modern technology, that all that is become mere *Bestand*, precisely cultivates salvation as the coming to thinking of *Seinsvergessenheit*. We have also seen that Heidegger does not only assume to be preparatory for the *Kehre*; the raising of the question of being, as the overcoming of metaphysics, *is* the *Kehre*. We must avoid the temptation to conceive of this in purely *chronological* terms. That the *Kehre* has been initiated decides nothing as to the chronology of the end of technology.

meeting point of being and man, *taken as such*, cannot function apart from the project of grounding the disclosure of being in its truth. The concept of *Dasein*, rigorously opposed to the subject-object dichotomy, is one essentially foreign to the conceptuality of metaphysical thinking and cannot be simply reinstated within a metaphysical horizon.

But what are we to make of Heidegger's reconceptualisation of the essence of truth? Whilst he writes that: 'Die Frage nach der Wesung der Wahrheit ist...die ursprünglich geschichtliche, *Geschichte-gründende Frage*'³, it remains nevertheless the case that Heidegger's conception of truth can be made intelligible and indeed plausible beyond the horizon traced out by an onto-normative history. However, in the absence of such a history, the necessity of asking the question of truth, of putting truth up for interrogation, the necessity for endorsing a conception of truth other than that which grounds the history of the West as a technological discourse, falls away. After all, no grounds can be proposed for accepting one conception of truth over another without begging the question unless they are taken from beyond the purview of that conception itself, namely, from an alternative normativity. Consequently, whilst truth conceived as disclosure is not itself rendered untenable by the unraveling of Heidegger's architectonic, nevertheless it is left, as it were, philosophically naked: unmotivated and defenseless.

The above are the most significant of the consequences our internal critique effects for Heidegger's philosophy. Read externally, however, our critique has much broader ramifications. These can all be understood as consequences of the denial of any general onto-normativity; any onto-normativity with extension beyond the individual projection. In the first place, this rules out all onto-normative meta-narratives, to borrow a phrase from Lyotard.⁴ Not only does Heidegger's history of being belong here, but also the Hegelian history of *Geist*, and perhaps Nietzsche's historical discourse of the *Übermensch*. Related to this point is the question of politics. We have delicately side-stepped the debate concerning Heidegger's political involvement, to which we wish to provide no contribution. It can nevertheless be pointed out at this stage that the onto-normative dimension of the political would not survive our critique in any generalisable form.

In regard to ethics the issue is more complicated. Whilst not all of the ethical theories put forward in the course of the history of Western philosophy have any recognisable onto-normative dimension to them, some do. Kant's ethical theory is one that might be thought to have such a dimension, in so far as it is, for him, an *essential* determination of man to be rational, the practical application of his reason being morality. The relation of our existential considerations to Kant's theory is particularly illuminating:

³ *Grundfragen der Philosophie*, p. 201

An objection commonly put against Kantian ethics is that it is entirely formulaic and therefore that its moral prescriptions are empty. There are various different versions of this claim. Kant is at pains to emphasise that, in so far as morality has to do with reason, and in so far as our natural inclinations are to be essentially opposed to our rational nature, for an action to have moral worth it must be done out of a sense of *duty*, that is, out of a respect for reason's legislation, and not at all on the basis of any inclination. We might wonder what this might mean and whether it is in the last analysis possible. *Given* the prior *respect*, it may seem unproblematical that one can act out of a sense of duty. But surely respect in this case must be taken to be some contentful motivation, that is, to use Kant's terminology, *eine Neigung*, an inclination. In the absence of such respect, in the case of someone who simply does not care what his duty might be, in what sense can a mere appeal to duty provide a motivation? This implies that all action is based upon a contentful motivation and that therefore Kant is wrong to draw a distinction between motivation on the basis of inclination and motivation on the basis of pure reason. Perhaps the distinction he wanted was between motives that spring from the practical application of reason – motives of prudence – and those that do not.—

This would be one way of putting the objection that Kant's ethics is formulaic. On the other hand, one could put the objection as follows. In the first formulation of the categorical imperative Kant makes an illegitimate jump between the *universality* of the structure of practical law and its *universalisability*. The first formulation of the categorical imperative demands that our maxims be capable of becoming universal law; but Kant jumps to this conclusion from the claim that, in so far as the moral will is devoid of content, merely the pure form of the law, of practical reason, which is necessarily universal across all rational being, must be that which grounds moral action. This argumentative structure would correspond to the following: the traffic laws are the same for everyone; therefore the traffic laws precisely permit that which can be done by everyone without internal contradiction. But in this case driving on the right-hand side of the road (in Great Britain) would be permissible, since that can be done by everyone without internal contradiction. But (in Great Britain at least) it is illegal to drive on the right-hand side of the road, despite the laws being the same for everyone. The mere universality of the structure of law does not mean, in the absence of any further premise, that universality is itself the law. Again, Kant is here to be convicted of being formulaic since universalisation could never function as a contentful principle of action, whereas the mere universality of a moral principle itself does not contain such an implication.

⁴ *The Post-modern Condition: a Report on Knowledge*. Lyotard defines post-modernism as "incredulity toward metanarratives" (p. xxiv), which would make Heidegger a staunch modernist and our response perhaps post-modernist.—

If these objections are allowed to delimit the Kantian moral enterprise, and if the ethical framework itself has been dismantled, then Kant's analysis of practical reason ends up proposing a version of the onto-normativity which we have put forward. Practical reason as such is *normatively prior* to inclination, just as existentiality is normatively prior to facticity. Resoluteness denotes this fact. But practical reason here is not taken to be contentless; it is taken to be full of the aims, goals and ambitions that define what might once have been called the rational nature of man, the existentiality of reason. And universalisability plays no role in the constitution of its normativity. What is demanded is particular to the given projection.

Now one might object to our critique of Heidegger's thinking by claiming that it relies too heavily upon a very specific interpretation of that thinking. It might be pointed out that Heidegger seems no longer to employ the concepts of conscience and resoluteness on the thought-scape that opens up beyond *Sein und Zeit*. And it may then appear disingenuous to criticise the whole of Heidegger's philosophical enterprise using such a small point for leverage. In response it can, in the first place, be pointed out that these concepts are absolutely crucial to the existential analysis of *Dasein*, and that the concept of *Dasein* performs such a significant role for the later Heidegger that the history of being is not understandable without it. The latter point is testified to by the place Heidegger accords *Dasein* in the most important text of his later thinking: *Beiträge zur Philosophie*. And there is no reason at all to suppose that it does not there carry the same meaning it bears in *Sein und Zeit* and every reason to suppose that it does.

It is of course true that in texts post-dating *Sein und Zeit* we never find another analysis of conscience, nor of guilt, and find only scant mention of resoluteness. In the case of conscience and guilt, this is no doubt because of the theological remnant which these terms carry; theo-logy, as Heidegger was later to point out, being only possible upon a metaphysical horizon. Heidegger may have abandoned the terminology, but did he abandon the phenomena which it was employed to evoke? It must always be borne in mind, after all, that the concept of truth with which Heidegger is working is not one of correspondence; it is one of disclosure, of unconcealment, one having purely to do with the way in which phenomena show themselves. What Heidegger writes is true in so far as it evokes, *dis-covers* the phenomena as they present themselves. The phenomenon to which Heidegger applied the archaic term "conscience" never recedes beneath Heidegger's philosophical horizon. He later calls it the *voice* [*Stimme*] or the *call* [*Ruf*] of being⁵; that which calls thinking. Historical mankind, we are told, is called by being to dwell as the guardian of its truth. Nevertheless, the "voice of being" was all that "conscience" meant in *Sein und Zeit*. *Dasein* was called by itself, by its own being, back to that being. Nothing at all hangs on the fact that being in this context was

⁵ Cf., in particular, *Einleitung zu: "Was ist Metaphysik?"*, *Wegmarken*.

understood in terms of existence: 'Dasein...heißt: Sorge des in ihr ekstatisch erschlossenen Seins des Seienden als solchen, nicht nur des menschlichen Seins.'⁶

Resoluteness also finds fresh articulation. In the first place, Heidegger refers back to it, as it functions in *Sein und Zeit*, a number of times. The *Einführung in die Metaphysik* tells us that: 'Die Entschlossenheit verschiebt nichts, drückt sich nicht, sondern handelt aus dem Augenblick und unausgesetzt. Ent-schlossenheit ist kein bloßer Beschluß zu handeln, sondern der entscheidende, durch alles handeln vor- und hindurchgreifende Anfang des Handelns...[D]as Wesen der Ent-schlossenheit liegt in der Ent-borgenheit des menschlichen Daseins für die Lichtung des Seins und keineswegs in einer Kraftspeicherung des "Agierens".'⁷ *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, originally from the same year (1935)⁸, adds that 'Die in "Sein und Zeit" gedachte Ent-schlossenheit ist nicht die decidierte Aktion eines Subjekts, sondern die Eröffnung des Daseins aus der Befangenheit im Seienden zur Offenheit des Seins.'⁹ And the dialogue which Heidegger wrote on the concept of *Gelassenheit*¹⁰ (1944/45) suggests that 'Man müßte dann z. B. das Wort "Entschlossenheit" so denken, wie es in "Sein und Zeit" gedacht ist: als das *eigens* übernommene Sichöffnen des Daseins für das Offene...Dann wäre das Wesen des Denkens, nämlich die Gelassenheit zur Gegnet, die Entschlossenheit zur wesenden Wahrheit.'¹¹

Resoluteness becomes re-articulated in terms of *Gelassenheit*, and in general in terms of the opening up of *Dasein* to the truth of being, that is, in terms of the essential relationship between man and being, man's answering response to the call of being. As should by now have become clear, it means exactly this and nothing else also in *Sein und Zeit*. Michael Zimmerman is therefore correct to claim in his book *The Eclipse of the Self* that resoluteness becomes in the later writings *Gelassenheit*.¹² He is wrong, however, to assume that there is some fundamental shift of meaning between them, and to base an interpretation of the *Kehre* thereon. Zimmerman claims that whilst the early concept of resoluteness was *voluntaristic*, the later concept of *Ge-lassen-heit* was rather the opposite, and that it was precisely

⁶ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 22

⁷ *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, p. 16

⁸ The first delivery of the lecture *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* (November 1935) postdates the summer semester lecture course, although Heidegger already refers to Van Gogh's shoes in the latter in a way similar to the November lecture. Cf. p. 27, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*.

⁹ *Holzwege*, p. 55

¹⁰ Which we shall make no attempt to translate. It is simple to appreciate its meaning, though, as long as the *Ge-lassen* is allowed to resonate fully.

¹¹ *Gelassenheit*, p. 59

¹² Paul Ricoeur also agrees with this assessment: 'The basic difference, perhaps, between the later Heidegger and Heidegger I would be that the self no longer finds its authenticity in freedom unto death, but in *Gelassenheit*, which is the gift of the poetical life.' [The Critique of Subjectivity and Cogito in the philosophy of Heidegger, *Heidegger and the Quest for Truth*, ed. Frings] As does Stanley Rosen: 'Not long after his resignation as chancellor of the University of Freiburg, Heidegger underwent a well-publicized and frequently mystified "turn" (*Kehre*) which may here be described very briefly as acceptance of *Gelassenheit*'. [*The Question of Being*, p. xix]

Heidegger's dissatisfaction with the voluntaristic and thus *subjectivistic* character of the existential analysis which precipitated the *Kehre*. We have already given an account of the *Kehre*, according to which Zimmerman's view is wrong. Phenomenologically, *Sein und Zeit* is not in the least subjectivistic,¹³ and the concept of resoluteness developed there has nothing to do with volition, with the will¹⁴, and already everything to do with *lassen*.

How has *Sein und Zeit* already overcome the metaphysical category of the will? By the exposition of the *temporal structure of projection*. Temporal projection structures the world, forms *gradients* of meanings, of possibilities, and thus of actions. It is this projective world-contouring which replaces the ancient category of will. Rather than talk about a curious force within man, we need recourse, in giving an account of his behaviour, merely to the structural profile of his world, to the shape of the particular configuration of structural relations cast as, or carved out by, his projection. It is rather like the advance that General Relativity made over Newton's laws concerning the theory of gravity. To account for the motion of heavenly bodies, one need not refer to some enigmatic force, but only – metaphorically, of course – to the *curvature* of space-time.

Entschlossenheit thus precisely overcomes the metaphysical category of the will. And Heidegger already intends it to be understood in terms of the *lassen* central to *Ge-lassenheit*. Not only is he at pains to emphasise this in all three of the quotes above, he also emphasises it in *Sein und Zeit* itself: 'Das eigentliche Rufverstehen charakterisierten wir als Gewissen-haben-wollen. Dieses In-sich-handeln-lassen des eigensten Selbst aus ihm selbst in seinem Schuldigsein repräsentiert phänomenal das im Dasein selbst bezeugte eigentliche Seinkönnen.'¹⁵ And a few pages later: 'Die Entschlossenheit bedeutet Sich-aufrufen-lassen aus der Verlorenheit in das Man.'¹⁶ And even more strongly in the essay *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit* written very shortly afterwards (1930): 'Die Freiheit ist als das Seinlassen des Seienden in sich das entschlossene, d. h. das sich nicht verschließende Verhältnis.'¹⁷ And: 'Das Seinlassen des Seienden vollzieht sich im offenständigen Verhalten. Das Seinlassen des Seienden als eines solchen im Ganzen geschieht aber wesensgerecht erst dann, wenn es zuweilen in seinem anfänglichen Wesen übernommen wird. Dann ist die Entschlossenheit

¹³ For example: 'Immer ist hier der Mensch das Subjectum, dem eine Weise und Art zugesprochen wird. Aber von all dem ist die Nennung des Da-seins in "Sein und Zeit" und später durch eine brückenlose Kluft getrennt.' [*Besinnung*, p. 143]

¹⁴ "Voluntary" is derived from Latin *voluntarius*, from *voluntas*, meaning "will". I take it then that in arguing that *Entschlossenheit* is voluntaristic, Zimmerman is in effect claiming that it has to do with the will. Correspondingly, he seems to understand inauthenticity in terms of egoism and selfishness; for example: 'To care for something inauthentically would be to manipulate it for selfish purposes.' [*Eclipse of the Self*, p. 44] This couldn't be further from Heidegger's intentions: 'Die Un-eigentlichkeit wird als Verfallen [*Verlorenheit*] an das Seiende begriffen' [*Besinnung*, p. 324], 'd. h. die Vormacht des Seienden selbst und seiner Überschattung des Seins, so zwar, daß die Not der Frage nach der Wahrheit des Seins ausbleiben muß.' [*Besinnung*, p. 145]

¹⁵ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 295

¹⁶ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 299

zum Geheimnis unterwegs in die Irre als solche.’¹⁸ This should not come as any surprise in so far as a *Lassen* (as in also too *Bewendenlassen*) is for Heidegger the necessary prerequisite for beings to emerge into the open region at all. It is a comportment towards them, and *Entschlossenheit*, resoluteness, as that mode of comportment that allows for the first time beings to emerge into the open region *in their truth* (“*unterwegs in die Irre als solche*”), is thus in fact the pre-eminent *Sein-lassen*.¹⁹ *Entschlossenheit* is already *Ge-lassen-heit*. The language changes, but the phenomenology does not.

It might be objected that there is nevertheless a fundamental difference between *Sein und Zeit* and the later texts regarding the normativity that we have identified, since although historical mankind is called to his *essence* [*Wesen*], mention of *essentia* and *Wesen* is systematically avoided in *Sein und Zeit*. Of course, this latter claim is not entirely true. In both *Beiträge zur Philosophie* and the *Einleitung zu: “Was ist Metaphysik?”* Heidegger returns to his formulation: ‘Das “Wesen” des Daseins liegt in seiner Existenz.’²⁰ The double quotation marks here apparently indicate that we have to do with the language of the tradition, even though Heidegger was later to appropriate this word as his own. But what then is “existence” if it is the “essence” of *Dasein*? Existence means the same as Ek-sistence, means the same as the ec-stasy of temporality: openness to the truth of being. ‘Was bedeutet “Existenz” in S. u. Z.? Das Wort nennt eine Weise des Seins, und zwar das Sein desjenigen Seienden, das offen steht für die Offenheit des Seins, in der es steht, indem es sie aussteht. Dieses Ausstehen wird unter dem Namen “Sorge” erfahren.’²¹ But openness to the truth of being is subsequently determined as *Entschlossenheit*. Are we not justified, then, in declaring resoluteness to be the essentiality of the essence of *Dasein* as existence?

But one way of expressing our objection against Heidegger would be to deny his essentialism.²² The danger is supposed to threaten the essence of man. But the particularity of resoluteness that we have advocated is too thin, too ephemeral to support the weight of an essence. One could only say that the essence of man is to have no essence. Understood in this way it becomes apparent that the critique we have developed of Heidegger’s philosophy is not at all new; indeed, it appears in various different manifestations in the commentary.

¹⁷ *Wegmarken*, p. 194

¹⁸ *Wegmarken*, p. 198

¹⁹ Which makes a nonsense of Haar’s rash claim that: ‘In *Being and Time* there was no way in which resoluteness could mean being open to the openness of being, that is, to the primacy of the truth or unfolding of being over all human thought, understanding or action.’ [*Heidegger and the Essence of Man*, p. 56]

²⁰ *Sein und Zeit*, p. 42. Originally italicised.

²¹ *Einleitung zu “Was ist Metaphysik?”*, *Wegmarken*, p. 374

²² Caputo brings out very strongly these “essentializing tendencies” of *Sein und Zeit* in *Demythologizing Heidegger*, pp. 78 ff and *passim*. The final assessment of (at least the later) Heidegger’s work which Caputo formulates in this book can be understood to be equivalent to our conclusion – only where we have produced a detailed grounding for this out of the depths of Heidegger’s thinking, Caputo proceeds in the spirit of pathos.

We, however, have given a systematic exposition of it, and one grounded on a close interpretation of Heidegger's texts.

If, then, we were asked to supply a diagnosis with our critique, we would say that Heidegger failed to draw sufficiently radical conclusions from his existential analysis. He failed to pursue the consequences of his analyses into the fluvial, fluxible terrain beyond the horizon of the concepts of authenticity and inauthenticity. Whilst the existential analysis grounds the philosophy of the history of being, it also undermines it. Beyond the collapse of all metaphysical principles, in the pure phenomenological light of the complex structures of human existence, there cannot be any essential need at all, and therefore no essential danger, for there can be no durable essence to face the danger. To say that 'Das "Wesen" des Daseins liegt in seiner Existenz' is to endorse this precisely, since existence is that concept which admits of no fixity, no generality, only particularity. Heidegger's words here therefore amount to contradiction – the essence of *Dasein* is that it has no essence –, and is it not *for this reason* that *Wesen* appears in double quotation marks? But in so far as the existential turn is intended to instigate the overcoming of the tradition by destabiling the categories of constant presence, of fixity, with temporal ecstasy, Heidegger can finally be convicted of remaining, in perhaps the very most important respect, entrapped by the metaphysics he professed to have left to itself.

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